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THE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

IN THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY:

A HISTORICAL VIEW

OF THE SUCCESSIVE CONVULSIONS AND SCHISMS THEREIN DURING THAT PERIOD.

BY WILLIAM HODGSON.

"I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer, O vine of Sibmah! The spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruit, and upon thy vintage."—JEREM., xlviii, 32.

"Yet the blessed Truth shall outlive it all, and emerge out of the very ruins, if it must come to that."—JOHN BARCLAY.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

DEFENCE of pure gospel truth, though not consistent with latitudinarianism, is yet entirely compatible with true liberality of feeling and Christian charity. The maintenance, too, of sound Christian doctrine, is more intimately connected with the conduct of a holy life, than is by many, in these days, duly appreciated. Not that a holy life and divine acceptance may not be attained, with nevertheless an ignorance, more or less, of facts on which sound doctrine is declared, or with an imperfect view of some of the great truths of the gospel through defects of education, or the influence of partial associations. Far otherwise. The grace of God is offered to all without respect of persons, to "every kindred, tongue, and nation," learned or ignorant as to this world's wisdom. Yet few will deny that even "the man of God" may be assisted in his path toward perfection of obedience, and be more "thoroughly furnished unto *all* good works," while holding fast to the very truths of the gospel, to the very "form of sound words," as recorded for our "instruction in righteousness" by the holy men of old who wrote as they were moved of the Holy Ghost. And it is believed to be a truth beyond gainsaying, that the nearer any man lives to the Source of all purity and holiness, the further will he be from any willingness to deny, or to oppose, or even to disparage the great and all-important truths or doctrines of the Christian religion, respecting matters connected with the salvation of the soul. And on the other hand, the further men *depart from* this "form of sound words," after having once known the way of truth, the more (with few exceptions, if any) will laxity of life and coldness of spirit, if not rebellion against the grace of God, characterize

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their walk; unless indeed they are caught in the opposite and by no means uncommon snare of inordinate activity, in the will and imagination of the unregenerate man, and are thus led by their soul's enemy into many things tending to satisfy uncrucified self, but not called for by the Lord of their best life, and calculated to land them among the painted imitations of religion, of which there is such plenty in and about Babylon.

This view will briefly explain the deeply settled conviction of the writer, held in unison with many others, that those who, through the mercy of the Most High, have been enabled to take hold of the fundamental truths of the gospel, and to see and feel their beauty and excellency, are no more at liberty to deny them, to part with them, or even to appear to sanction the substitution of anything else for them, than would be the holders of any the most important of earthly trusts, to betray that trust and permit all manner of inroads upon it. Nay, indeed, far more, if possible, are they bound to faithfulness herein, inasmuch as heavenly values so far transcend those of a material nature.

Thus it has come to pass, that in the convulsions which have assailed the Society of Friends during the present century, they who have remained bound to the law and the testimony through all, faithful to the trust committed to their keeping, have felt no liberty whatever, to compromise with or connive at departures from the truth of their profession; but could do no other than oppose all innovations upon the fundamental principles of the compact. And in doing so, they cannot justly be charged with intolerance or illiberality, inasmuch as they were endeavoring to defend no less a treasure than the purity of the precious faith of the gospel.

The nature of these convulsions in the Society of Friends has been very imperfectly understood by the community at large, and even by great numbers of the members of the Society itself; otherwise the devastation produced by them would have been small indeed, compared with the actual results. As years have rolled on, and many of those concerned in them have passed away from earthly scenes, the imperfect

acquaintance with their nature seems to have increased, rather than diminished; and the momentous events which characterized their development are passing into oblivion, while the results are as potent as ever in changing the character of the Christian standard always previously held up to the world as that of the Society of Friends.

In a frequent consideration of this, and of the fact that most of those who were familiar with the circumstances characterizing the two principal and opposite defections of this century among our people have already passed away, and the rest are rapidly going, so that a generation is even now on the scene of action, which has known nothing personally of the rise and early progress of those schisms, it has appeared to the writer, for some years past, that a religious duty rested upon him, to prepare to leave behind him, for the information of successors, a succinct, and, so far as he might be enabled, a truthful account of these eventful and sorrowful times. Knowing the darkness of the picture, he shrunk for a while from the undertaking. But the weight of the duty continuing to press upon him, he has done what he could, and the result is in the ensuing volumes.

Some may be inclined to ask, *Cui bono?* who or what can be benefited by thus exposing to the world the weaknesses and sore afflictions of the highly favored Society of Friends? Is it not uncalled for, unwise, and injurious to the great cause of Christian truth? Why recall the bitterness of polemical disputes now settled, as some might say, by separation of the parties? Why stir up once more the slumbering embers, years after the blaze has gone down? This is an important question, and claims a candid consideration. The writer would, he trusts, be among the last of men *needlessly* to expatiate on the faults of those who have been eminent as preachers of righteousness or examples to the flock of Christ. Yet there must be a limit to such forbearance, or error may be insinuated and eventually stalk abroad under the garb of truth, unchecked by those who perceive its falseness. When radical errors are imbibed, and sanctioned or promoted by such eminent individuals, their example and influence for evil may

become tenfold more potent than have been their previous precepts for good; the multitude not perceiving their change, and the course of error being a downward track, easy to the flesh, and run with accelerative force. Thus, through want of the never ceasing watch, a whole people may be turned aside from the straight and narrow way before they are aware of it, and the character of their influence in the world for the promotion of holiness entirely changed; while yet they continue to retain the name, and are looked upon superficially as the same people. But the mere reputation of a Society should never be put in competition for a moment with the maintenance of the pure principles of the gospel.

It becomes, therefore, a *necessity* for those who know the value of the primitive truth, and understand the nature of the aberrations from it, if they would still have it distinguished from the falsifications which have taken its place, if they would still desire to maintain it unsullied, and see it held up before their fellow-men as the pure and unchangeable truth of Christ, if they would not have their profession falsified, and its name assumed before the world by those to whom it does not belong, it becomes a necessary duty to endeavor to prevent their fellow-members and the world at large from being deluded by incorrect statements and false pretensions. Indeed, their fellow-members and the professing Christian world have a right to require this of the still faithful ones, as professing to be set for the defence of the gospel. And this cannot be done without bringing to light the real facts of the case, and the essential nature and working of the schism. But if it is faithfully done, will it not tend to clear the way for those who remain steadfast, still to hold up and cling to the true standard? Will it not plainly point out to sincere and honest inquirers, who are often greatly puzzled to know the difference between a true and a false profession, marks whereby they may perceive where the truth lies, and where error has taken its place? And is not this of far more essential importance than any supposed injury to be done, by exposure of personal lapses or corporate weaknesses? Does it not indeed tend most convincingly to impress the salutary lesson, that neither in-

dividuals nor the church can be safe from the snares of the devil, any longer than they continue firmly to abide by the primitive truth into which the Lord has led them, and watch with unremitting vigilance against all attempts to turn them aside?

Was not this the chief aim of Hippolytus (who suffered martyrdom about the year 238), in writing his history of "all the heresies" which had, up to his time, troubled the church?* An account was given in this book, more or less minute, of no less than thirty-two departures from pure doctrine in those early ages, with the names of the parties mainly implicated; and the author even spared not to expose the corrupt conduct and views of the bishop of Rome. He was not deterred by the consideration, how unpopular such a development would be among the advocates of innovation. He wrote this remarkable work, doubtless, not for the sake of merely describing the heresies which had arisen among them from the beginning of the Christian era, which of itself alone would have been a barren topic; but as a warning to succeeding ages, and to elucidate the difference between sound doctrine and practice and unsound, so that the fundamental truths of the gospel might continue to be maintained.

The course of public events in the history of the world, has shown a very frequent, if not a continual conflict between right and wrong, often illusory and bewildering to those whose knowledge of them is defective. It is therefore eminently the duty of those who undertake to write history, in ever so humble a line, to endeavor, by all means within their reach, to present not merely the naked facts as they occurred, but this in such a manner of elucidation of their bearing and character, as to lead the reader to an appreciation of the right and a disapproval of the wrong. Truthfulness must be the never ceasing aim. And so far as the writer of history keeps simply to this straightforward course, he cannot be properly charged with undue partiality in evincing his own predilections for what is right. The historian of the Reformation is not

* See Bunsen's account of "Hippolytus and his Age."

have not been allowed to lead him to suppress any statement needful to a just view of events, or to overstate in any degree, the failings of individuals, or dwell upon them beyond what was warranted or required by a pure regard for the necessity of presenting clearly the causes and essential circumstances of the successive inroads of schism.

Some apology may also be due to the reader, for the occasional introduction of the author's personal knowledge of certain occurrences; which he fears may appear like egotism; but which has arisen from a sense of the necessity of verifying or elucidating, as far as practicable, what was to be brought into view, characterizing the course of events.

The first volume will carry the history to about the year 1840.

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THE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

IN

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE STATE OF THE SOCIETY ABOUT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The Society of Friends (commonly called Quakers) has been assailed, during the present century, in a marvellous and unexampled manner, by a series of convulsions arising not from without but from within; from defections of its own members from its fundamental principles. It is the aim of the following pages to trace the working of these convulsions, and to endeavor to show the difference between true Quakerism (so called) and false pretensions.

The beginning of the nineteenth century found the Society, as a whole, a living and influential body, though in many of its parts, and in some of its general features, in a languid condition. A large proportion of its members were still sincerely attached to its original and char-

acteristic principles and discipline; and not a few, both in Great Britain and in America, were earnestly concerned to live in accordance therewith, under the guidance and help of Him who promised to be with His own to the end of the world, and to lead and guide them by His Spirit into all truth. And it is believed that at this time such a thing was entirely unknown in the Society, as the sanctioning, *by any meeting*, greater or smaller, of an open departure from its ancient faith and doctrine.

Nevertheless, in many places—perhaps to some extent in all its quarters—the spirit of the world, and the fascinations of affluence and ease, had made successful inroads; and the love of many for its self-denying life had grown cold, and had given place, especially in America, to great apathy and unconcern as to a religious life and conversation; and in England to a weariness with the restrictions attendant on a real conformity with the principles and discipline of their profession; an unwillingness to wait on the Lord in all humility for the fresh manifestations of his will to them individually; and a disposition on the contrary to indulge, along with the world, in many things by it considered lawful, but which were certainly not expedient for the promotion of a self-denying life. There was, however, as yet, no general and obvious intention manifested, to discard or modify the primitive doctrines of the Society, except perhaps that the great doctrine of perfect freedom from sin was being gradually ignored or lost sight of. There had been some local and limited departures from sound doctrine, but these had not been of such magnitude as to unsettle the whole Society; and indeed were of a

nature not likely to attract any great number of adherents.

It may be well, here, to revert briefly to the solid, substantial character of the religion of our early Friends —of those who were instrumental in establishing the Society as a distinct people, and also of those who came after them, to sustain it in the same faith. When it pleased the most High to raise up, by means of our forefathers, a people to stand as a visible gathered church, professedly and practically on the foundation of His pure and unchangeable truth — even primitive Christianity unmixed with human contrivances — it was in great abasedness of self that they went forth, and with a constant reliance on the putting forth and going before, of Him who had called them into his especial service. They had passed through many and deep trials in their heavenward journey, and bought the truth at a price; having, according to their respective measures, known what it was to be crucified with Christ, spiritually, buried with Him by baptism unto death, and raised again, by his mighty power and love, into newness of life, and communion with Him and his church militant.

They had fairly weighed the value of this world in the balance of the sanctuary, and found it lighter than vanity. And having left all for the sake of peace with God, and put on strength, in his name, and in his power, not their own, to run all the ways of his requiring, they were not to be prevailed upon, by the fascinations of worldly ease, or the threatenings and actual sufferings inflicted by the enemies of truth, to forsake the cross-bearing principles of primitive Christianity which they

felt themselves divinely called to profess before the world, and to exemplify by a holy life and conversation; nor to barter them away by any cowardly connivance with measures calculated, although in a covert and hardly perceptible manner, to undermine their precious faith, or destroy the vitality of their testimony for the truth and against error. Indeed they were exceedingly alive to, and jealous of anything which tended in the smallest degree in that direction; and were constantly on the alert to sound an alarm of such dangers, and to expose all such attempts; so that neither the flock should receive injury, nor the cause of truth be subjected to reproach, by any supineness on their part. Witness the vast multitude and variety of their controversial writings, published during the first half century of the existence of the Society, to repel attacks or insinuations of the enemies of truth from abroad, or of no less hostile apostates from their own ranks.

Their successors, in the eighteenth century, came into possession of a comparatively quiet and peaceable inheritance—an inheritance not gained through their own sufferings—for the Society had outlived the rancorous hostility by which at first it had been hoped to suppress it; and there were now comparatively few calls upon the zeal of its members, either to endure suffering for their testimony to the truth, or to come forward in its defence against gainsayers through the press. Nevertheless, the comparatively few instances which did occur (during this period) in which opponents came against the Society, or false brethren arose to promote disorders within it, were promptly met, and measures faithfully taken to answer the injurious allegations of the one, or

frustrate the dividing schemes of the other. No such thing as an open attempt at modification of its primitive doctrines was permitted to pass unchecked. And many eminent instruments continued to be raised up, throughout that century, to promulgate the ancient faith, in a measure of the true zeal and faithfulness of their predecessors.

Yet, in looking over the body at large, about the close of the eighteenth century, it is impossible to resist the conviction, that notwithstanding the original doctrines, and to a considerable degree the characteristic practices of the Society had been sustained, and many of its members were livingly concerned to walk worthy of its high vocation, and moreover that some of its views of pure religion and morality were making gradual headway in the world, and ameliorating certain corruptions of public sentiment, which had for centuries been blots upon the profession of Christianity; and thus its principles were surely, though perhaps imperceptibly, operating as a leaven in the community, to improve the general condition of public feeling, if not of professing Christian societies; yet that a state of lethargy was coming over many of its members, accompanied by sad ignorance of the vital principles of their profession; a state of ease was eating out the good seed in the minds of others; and a state of mere formality, promoting a strict but lifeless maintenance of the outward forms and discipline, was beginning to characterize the walk of some more or less active members in various places; altogether producing a condition of weakness, in which the Body was ill prepared to continue the work of "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to

the saints," in case of the arrival of any unexpected and general storm.

In short, it may safely be said of this period, that only a small proportion of the members of the Society at large had really submitted, in the school of Christ, to those deep baptisms and thorough lessons which are needful to prepare the soul for walking in that path which "shineth more and more unto perfect day," and which Stephen Crisp has so well described in his graphic account of his own early experience; but many had taken up with an easier way, the way of a more superficial learning, through books and from one another. Hence the Society was overrun with the results and influence of shallow experience. And this condition of things increased continually after the beginning of the nineteenth century.

A sense of this languid and lapsing condition of the Society was acknowledged by the Yearly Meeting of London, in its General Epistle of 1799, wherein they made use of the following language: "Now, turning our attention to the church in its more collected capacity, of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, we perceive that weakness and languor continue to pervade the deliberations of some of them, on the important concerns of the Society; and often prevent the due and timely support of that Christian discipline, which we have long experienced to be, under Providence, as a wall of preservation."

As a result of this languor, and of the encroachments of an easy, worldly, superficial spirit, it is believed to be unquestionable, that for a considerable period of time, the exercise of the discipline had become, in some places,

increasingly relaxed and inefficient; and in others it was maintained in a formal, legal, and lifeless manner; equally unavailing to the preservation of the body, "without spot or wrinkle," as the church was designed to be, or of the members as "sons" and daughters "of God, without rebuke," clean and blameless among men.

A relaxation of the wholesome obligations and restraints of the discipline, long continued, must promote libertinism in the church, and induce a corresponding increase of merely nominal members; whilst, on the other hand, the mere legal and formal maintenance of disciplinary rules is no less dangerously productive of lifelessness and hypocrisy. In either case, a class of members will be likely to accumulate, ready for the influence of any plausible *ism*, wherewith restless spirits may undertake to agitate the body.

To add to the dangers of this condition of the Society, it was exposed at that time, in some degree, to its share of the pernicious influences afloat in the public mind, arising from that reckless spirit of what was called "free inquiry," but more correctly was "free unbelief"—a presumptuous determination not to believe what was not understood—which had insinuated itself among all classes of people, both in Europe and America, since the outbreak of the French revolution. For although very few if any members of the Society advocated the open skepticism then so prevalent in many quarters, yet the faith of divers was more or less undermined and unsettled by the tide of a loose public opinion, and some of the deistical writings of Joseph Priestley, if not also of that unscrupulous speculator Thomas Paine, did undoubtedly find their way into some families in a hidden manner,

and worked as a poisonous leaven in the minds of the inexperienced and unwary, who were taken with their boldness and novelty.

The journal of that honest and faithful servant of Christ, Joseph Hoag (especially from chapter vii to chapter xi), gives ample and unmistakable evidence that great disorders had crept into many meetings in America, about the period of which we are speaking; so as to bring much reproach upon the precious truth of our profession. Not only was there a sorrowful frequency of individual offences, but it is very plainly manifest that a class had risen to such a pitch in some places, as to form a party opposed to the faithful sustaining of the discipline, or the testimony of Truth against offenders. Among numerous instances to be found through his journal, we may cite the following as nearest to the period of time under notice. At one place, he says, in reference to them who ought to be the pillars of the church:* "The consideration of this subject many times causes my heart to tremble, when I look towards the gallery. Oh, friends, were this class what they ought to be, how would they hold up the standard of light and life to the people, and the language of encouragement to the assemblies of the Lord! Then would He bless his heritage and his standard-bearers with wisdom and sound judgment. But, friends, it appears to me, there are amongst you those who have mounted Moses' seat, who sit in your galleries, whom the Lord has never placed there, and whose conduct has been a reproach," etc.

* Journal of Joseph Hoag, Heston's edition, p. 59.

Shortly afterwards, at another meeting, he says: "I found I had not been mistaken in regard to them . . . . they were the most reserved of any Friends in conversation that I ever saw; strictly uniform in their dress—plain to a nicety. Their select members were so particular, that many of our little preachers hardly dare to peep out before them. When I came to sit with them, I was almost amazed for one hour; instead of finding all things in perfection, I could think of little else than that when the sons of God met together, Satan came also amongst them;" and then opening to them this subject, he went on to show them their condition, as those "who had been anointed with royal oil," but "had vilely fallen on the mountains of Gilboa."*

At another place he says: "Though the business was conducted regularly, the want of concern to live up to our ancient and present principles was too obvious; which caused deep exercises and painful labor; the aged buried in the earth; the young on the wings of the wind, embracing the customs of the world in their dress and address," etc.†

At another meeting, he remarks: . . . . "The last meeting I was at, when all present were members, except one person. The Lord showed me that the cause of the distress I felt in their meetings was, that the heads of the people had drawn their swords on their fellows who were better than themselves, disordering the flock, and confusing the heritage of God; and if there was not a stopping and a turning about, the Lord would arise, and make bare His arm, and would turn and overturn

* Journal of Joseph Hoag, p. 64. † Ib., p. 100.

till there should be a falling away, and a cutting off to rise no more; for the Lord would arise and support His dependent ones. I had to deliver it in plain full terms; then felt my mind relieved, and at liberty to depart."*

In reference to the painful condition of things in his own meeting, in the year 1800,† he says: "Those friends who opposed and complained of the discipline did, in nearly every case, oppose calling to account any of our members, for evil conduct of whatever description, even when brought to the Monthly Meeting. The overseers were faithful and upright, who with a few other Friends found it hard getting along. . . . . Several honest-hearted Friends were drawn away to join and sympathize with this libertine class to their hurt. One who had a fine gift in the ministry, which was acceptable to his Friends, was so wrought upon by their placid smoothness, sanctity of countenance, and pitiful tales, affecting grief at home and abroad, that he sallied off with them: his gift dwindled away, and he became a poor sleepy thing like the heath in the desert."

Nor was this weak condition confined to the Society in America. A few years earlier, Sarah R. Grubb, of Clonmel, daughter of William Tuke, of York, and a deeply experienced minister, who travelled diligently in the ministry during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, was often much cast down under a sense of the apathy and worldly-mindedness, and consequent desolation, appearing in many parts of the Society in Great Britain at that period. In 1780, while visiting Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire, she thus wrote on this

* Journal of Joseph Hoag, p. 150. † Ib., p. 156.

sad subject: "We are abundantly convinced, that they who are sent out in this day, to a people who have in a great measure forsaken the law and testimony, and, what is still worse, see not their states, but are secure in themselves, have not to eat much pleasant bread. For I think I may say, it hath often been our lot to go bowed down all the day long, and to mourn in a deep sense of the great desolation which overspreads the Society; insomuch, that we often admire that there should be any sent out to visit them, and that the feet of those that are rightly shod, should not more generally be turned to others; for from these there are the greatest hopes, in this county (Cheshire), which is likely, in many places, to be left desolate of Friends who keep their places."

In Scotland, she wrote still more strongly, after the Yearly Meeting at Edinburgh. Speaking of some, for whom their minds were principally exercised, she says: "Through all, the sense of deep, hidden, as well as flagrant corruption, so impressed my mind, that I was led to believe, truth will never prosper in this place, nor the excellence of it appear unveiled, till not only the branches of the corrupt tree are cut off, but the root so dug up, that the remembrance thereof may rot. And then there is reason to hope," etc.

And in the year 1786, while travelling through a great portion of England, she wrote from the southwest thus: "In these western counties through which we have come, viz., Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, and Devonshire, the Society, as to the circulation of that life which we profess to be seeking the influence of, is indeed lamentably low. A worldly spirit, and a state

that is neither hot nor cold, greatly prevails, so that the few living members (for there is here and there one) are scarcely able to lift the standard of truth, or revive the remembrance of the law."

It is to be remembered, that these descriptions are not from the pen of a superficial observer, but from the openings of truth as manifested in the mind of a woman of uncommon qualifications, both by nature and by divine grace, to form a just judgment of the state of the churches.

Mary Peisley, who afterwards married that eminent minister Samuel Neale, is quoted by John Kendall, in his instructive collection of "Letters of Friends," as expressing herself in these words: "God will divide in Jacob and scatter in Israel, before that reformation is brought about which He designs."

Quotations might be indefinitely multiplied, from various writers of this period, all concurring to evince the sorrowful truth, that a conformity to the world, and great spiritual languor, had prevailed over many of the members of the Society, and that a correspondent laxity in regard to the true maintenance of the discipline was sapping the strength of the body in many places.

Job Otis, late of Scipio, in the State of New York, and previously residing at New Bedford, Mass., who witnessed the devastating effects of this spirit, and left a circumstantial manuscript history of the disturbances thence resulting, in New Bedford, Lynn, and some other parts of New England, from 1819 to 1825 (a work of more than six hundred closely written pages), has judiciously traced the sorrowful circumstances occurring in

the Society to certain predisposing or preparing features which were apparent about the beginning of the century. These features may be cited as follows, condensed from his lucid and ample statement of them, viz.:

1st. Outward ease and prosperity, and worldly possessions and honors, begetting pride and highmindedness, and dwarfishness in religion, with an increasing repugnance to the cross of Christ and its restraints.

2d. Too great intimacy with the people of the world and enemies of the cross of Christ, bringing in the spirit of the world and its attachments and associations.

3d. A (so-called) liberality of sentiment, according to the world's estimate, under pretence of Christian charity.

4th. Taking things on trust, and adopting the views of admired persons, rather than seeking for the truth in the line of individual experience.

5th. Want of a due engagement and exercise of mind to experience preservation from day to day from the snares of the enemy, and an advancement in the way of life and peace.

6th. Weakness in parents, in not properly restraining their children, and bringing them up in subjection to the cross of Christ.

7th. Laxity in the administration of the discipline, with false tenderness and a deceitful superficial healing of wounds, till the whole body became diseased.

8th. A want of real honesty and uprightness, and unreserved dedication of heart, in many who ought to have been of clean hands for the Lord's work, and submitted fully to the baptisms and sufferings necessary to qualify them for it.

9th. Self-exaltation and spiritual pride in some young ministers of promise, who, through unwatchfulness were induced to plume themselves with their gifts and supposed attainments, and so soared above their level in the church, decked themselves with the Lord's jewels, and lost their former humility and single dependence on His preserving and guiding hand.

10th. Thus they were led into a false estimate of their abilities to do anything for the truth, and becoming vain in their imaginations, their foolish hearts were darkened; and they endeavored to comprehend the mysteries of Christ's Kingdom in the will and understanding of man, and gave a loose rein to that which feeds on knowledge, and thus laid themselves open to dangerous notions and wild views.

Still another source of weakness had been for many years the baneful influence of slavery, especially, but not exclusively, in the more southerly parts of the Society in America. Job Scott, in travelling through Maryland and Virginia, in 1789, wrote in the following terms respecting what came within his own observation: "Truth is at a very low ebb indeed among Friends; and divers meetings, formerly large and flourishing, exhibit scarce anything now but desolation. When we are at meetings with Friends only, we suffer almost unto death; and it then seems as if we could scarcely get along much further. Negro slavery has almost ruined this country, both as to religion, and the outward soil of the earth. Friends' children have been brought up in idleness. . . . . From infancy, to settlement in families of their own, they have spent much of their

time in riding about for pleasure. The consequence has been almost the extinction of the Society."*

I may be permitted to repeat here, as applicable to our present subject, a remark made in another place.† "Some may think that a veil should be drawn over such a development for the credit of the Society; but a due consideration of the subject will, it is thought, lead to the conclusion, that the truth of history is precious, that the cause of righteousness is promoted by honest Christian candor in the historian, and that it is needful to vindicate the righteous dealings of the Head of the church toward his people, by a reference to the oft-repeated warnings given to the degenerate portions of His heritage. It will thus also be seen, that the enemy of truth did not succeed in planting his doctrinal errors, until there was a departure in heart and in practice, from the true life of the Gospel; so that gainsayers are deprived of their plea, that our dependence on the 'Inspeaking Word of Divine Grace' is not sufficient to preserve from heresy, without the aid of human learning and acquirements; for that is shown to have been departed from by many, before they were carried into doctrinal deviation."

In contemplating the foregoing delineation of the condition of the Society, which I believe is by no means too darkly colored, though there were doubtless many portions to which the melancholy picture would not fully apply; can we wonder that the arch enemy of all good,

* Journal and Works of Job Scott, vol. ii, p. 72; Comly's Edition. See also vol. i, p. 278.

† Preface to the "Journal of Joseph Hoag," D. Heston's Edition, p. v.

who had in vain attempted to destroy it by sore persecutions from without, in the times of its early zeal and strength, now saw a fair opportunity for accomplishing the destruction of the vitality of its testimony to pure Christianity, by prompting the introduction one after another of successive novelties and perversions of its precious principles, by those professedly within its own borders? The gates were left open, and he entered; and wonderful was the devastation produced by schism after schism, which followed during the next fifty years.

The following narrations, first of the troubles in Ireland about the end of the last century, and then of the kindred disturbances in New England some twenty-five years later, although their perusal may appear like wading through a Dismal Swamp, will not be found devoid of instruction, and will in some degree further elucidate the weak and lax condition of the Society, whereby it was laid open to the snares of the enemy, and prepared for the great convulsion which soon ensued. These disturbances were the forerunners, or premature and premonitory outbreaks of the Hicksian convulsion, as the Beacon schism was afterwards of the great devastation produced by the prevalence of the doctrines of Joseph John Gurney and others.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCHISM IN IRELAND, IN WHICH HANNAH BARNARD TOOK A CONSPICUOUS PART.

The grievous defection which sprang up in Ireland about the end of the eighteenth century, and bore bitter fruit likewise among some in England and America, was the first of a series of schisms which probably resulted in great degree from the influences above spoken of. Great unsettlement of principle showed itself in various parts of the Society in that island, about the year 1795, assuming the plausible but hollow pretension of an aim for a higher state of reformation.

Many highly gifted ministers of the gospel from America, were about that period led to visit Europe, including Samuel Emlen, George Dillwyn, Job Scott, Richard Jordan, William Savery, Nicholas Waln, David Sands, and Thomas Scattergood; several of whom were concerned to travel in Ireland. It was soon made manifest to the understandings of these servants of Christ, in the Divine instruction from time to time given them in relation to the condition of the churches among which they travelled in the ministry of the gospel, that a spirit was afloat in that island, the tendency of which was to lead to a disbelief in some of the fundamental points of our Christian faith; and they were led into deep concern on this account, and induced to labor faith-

fully as way opened, and as a qualification was witnessed, for the safety and welfare of the flock, and the integrity of our holy profession.

Nicholas Waln, a minister from Philadelphia, while on his visit to Ireland in 1795, attended the Province Meeting of Leinster, held at Mount Melick; where, without any previous information, he spoke of "an intimation which had impressed his mind with great exercise and painful concern; showing that, however disguised and hidden, there was a spirit at work that would divide and scatter, and draw off many that were then in high stations, into self-sufficiency and disbelief of the truths of the gospel." This was such a surprise to some, that they were for passing a censure upon him; but a few experienced minds fully united with him. When William Savery came to the same place in 1798, the same rending spirit was impressively felt and detected; soon after which it showed itself more openly.*

But it does not appear that any clear and connected account of this schism was preserved on the part of the Society; so that in endeavoring to furnish such a statement, we have no other resource than what can be collected together from scattered notices, to be found in various journals or other writings of Friends, compared with the statements of an elaborate but partial narrative of the events, published soon afterwards by a partisan residing in Liverpool; who appears to have had access to official documents, or copies of them; but whose work has sunk into obscurity, and is now seldom to be met with.

* See "Life of William Savery," in Friends' Library, vol. i, p. 437.

About the year 1796, the National Half-Year's Meeting of Ireland, which for two or three years had committees under appointment to visit and endeavor to strengthen two of its Quarterly Meetings, where the abovementioned unsettlement particularly showed itself, was brought under a renewed weighty consideration of the weakness reported by these committees as being prevalent in the branches, and appointed a joint-committee of men and women Friends, to consider what further measures it might be best to take for the help of the body. In this committee, the holding of joint-meetings for discipline, composed of men and women unitedly, was proposed, and favorably looked upon by some, as likely to be productive of greater strength; but this being considered by others as rather a novel arrangement, which had as yet only taken place in some very small meetings, it was not acceded to;* and all that appears to have resulted from the deliberations of the committee, in the way of recommendation, was the suggestion, "that a more frequent interchange of visits between men's and women's meetings, as Friends may find their minds influenced, would be of advantage in the conducting of the discipline;" with an encouragement also to a more frequent visiting of other Monthly Meetings, according to the pointings of duty.

The weakness and inadequacy of these suggestions seems to indicate that the life of truth in the body was too low to admit of any vigorous measures being pursued for a reformation. Indeed the very language of a

* By Beck and Ball's Account of the early London Meetings, it appears that about the rise of the Society many meetings for discipline were so held. See pp. 91, 92, 354.

minute of the Half-Year's Meeting, in appointing one of these committees, in 1794, seems clearly to intimate a very low and unhealthy condition even in that collective body itself; and its condition had since certainly not been improving, but the contrary. That minute required the committee "to confer together," and "report if *any expedient* may occur to them as an attempt to remedy the many deficiencies obvious among us." It seems difficult to believe that this was really the language of a meeting of Friends—that the successors of Fox, Penn, and Barclay, in their Half-yearly Convocation for Ireland, should be blindly groping thus about after some "expedient," whereby to bring spiritual life again into the body! Such an expression shows their aim to have been low indeed; and all such "attempts to remedy" the evils pressing upon them might well prove abortive. There seems to be no reason to doubt that members occupying influential positions in that body, but who had imbibed the spirit of the defection, were cramping its energies and benumbing its right sense of the state of things among them.

Indeed, the disunity and disaffection had by this time so extensively shown itself in various places, under a high assumption of greater enlightenment, and bold pretensions of a purer standard than the Society had yet attained—but unhappily with the proofs from life and conduct that this was only a hollow pretence, covering up the rapid advance of unbelief in some of the most important doctrines of the Christian religion—that the body of the Society was for a time almost paralyzed, and no united effort was practicable, in the way of a general and living concern and zeal, under which the National

Meeting might have moved in the authority and efficiency of the Truth. Between unbelief, on the one hand, and flat formality on the other, the life and efficiency of the body seemed almost gone. Yet the Lord was not unmindful of his flock, but from time to time vouchsafed support and strength to his humble dependent children, who singly trusted in him, and preserved a living remnant of these from being taken by the snares of the enemy.

The next year, 1797, the schism became painfully and openly manifest. In the Select Monthly Meeting of Carlow, the clerk, Abraham Shackleton, an elder, and son of that worthy elder, Richard Shackleton, of Ballitore, then deceased, openly objected to the long-established practice of reading the Advices attached to the Queries for Meetings of Ministers and Elders, under the plea that it was "limiting the operations of the Spirit, and teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."* This was, in short, the commencement of an open attack on the system of discipline itself; and in venturing upon it, Abraham Shackleton knew well that he represented the views of a numerous body, both in and out of the Select Meetings, of such as were disposed to support him in an attempt to discard some of the long-cherished testimonies and usages of the Society.

This circumstance was almost immediately followed by similar objections being made in the Select Monthly Meetings of Moate and Mountmelick. All these belonged to the Quarterly or Province Meeting of Lein-

* Rathbone's "Narrative of Events in Ireland," an unsound and partisan publication, but considered to be correct in regard to documentary facts and quotations, so far as it gives them.

ster; and information of what had thus occurred was given in the ensuing Select Quarterly Meeting. But it does not appear that any step was taken by that meeting to check the progress of the defection.

In the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline, when the Answers to the Queries from the several Monthly Meetings were under consideration, it was found that in the Answer from Carlow, respecting the Holy Scriptures, the word "holy" had been omitted. On inquiry as to the reason of this unusual departure from the expression of the Query, a long reply was made, objecting to the epithet of "holy," as belonging to the Scriptures, and alleging that "many parts of the Scriptures are truly excellent and instructive; but that there are other parts which cannot with propriety be regarded as either authentic or instructive to the general class of readers; that there are some passages, which it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile or render consistent with each other;" that the character of the Almighty is in various parts misrepresented, and "attempted to be portrayed by injurious and degrading representations!" And when this was denied, and the uniform belief of the Society in their divine harmony and excellency maintained, and the epithet "holy," as constantly applied to them by our worthy ancestors, was clearly vindicated, the response was made, that "the setting up the opinions or conduct of our ancestors as limits," "was inconsistent with the liberty which belonged to the gospel;" and that, if Scripture were to be denominated "holy," all other writings proceeding from the same Spirit were entitled to the same appellation; so

that it must be considered either as having no appropriate meaning, or merely a superstitious one.

These were bold assertions in the open meeting. But it does not appear that any decided action was taken at that time. Probably the sound members were astounded at the very boldness of the tone assumed, and scarcely knew at once what course to take.

William Savery, one of the American ministers, travelling at that time in Ireland, had an opportunity of conversing with Abraham Shackleton, at Waterford, in the first month of 1798. In his Journal he thus mentions the interview: "At my lodgings, in the evening, "came Robert Greer and Abraham Shackleton; the lat-"ter from Ballitore, who had come forty-two miles in "order to see me. He holds opinions of a singular na-"ture; objects to the five books of Moses in partic-"ular, but in general to the accounts of the Jews in the "Old Testament, and various parts of the New Testa-"ment; professes to think there is little if any need of "books of any kind on religious subjects; that they "only darken the mind, and keep it from turning itself "wholly unto God, the fountain of all light and life. "But of all books of a religious kind, he especially dis-"likes Friends' Journals, and has but a slight opinion "of ministry and discipline, and all secondary helps in "general; but is for having all people turned to the "Divine Light in themselves alone. Christ, he says, "was *a good man*—the leader of the people—*because* he "was wholly *obedient* to this light, which he was in an "especial manner filled with. He thinks the Evangelists "are poor historians; that Paul brought much of his epis-"tles from the feet of Gamaliel, and many parts of them

"are therefore rabbinical stuff; that Christianity was the "same to those who were obedient to the anointing, be- "fore the coming of Christ in the flesh as since, etc. I "perceived all this was accompanied with a pretended "looking towards a greater state of perfection and re- "demption than our Society has yet arrived at. For "my part, I could not see as he did, nor unite with "him in his erroneous expressions and opinions; and I "feel a fear that they will produce much hurt, if he and "others in this nation are not brought into deep abase- "ment; his talents and morality making error in his "hands more dangerous." The next day, after the mid-week meeting, he says: "Went with Abraham Shackle- "ton to a Friend's house, and opened to him more of "my disapprobation than I had before." *

The National Half-Year's Meeting, in 1797, had concluded to drop one of its sessions, and thenceforth to hold but one meeting during the year; and accordingly it met, the next year, in the city of Dublin, in the fourth month, 1798, as the Yearly Meeting for Ireland; still, however, acknowledging some degree of subordination to the Yearly Meeting of London, by sending representatives, and Answers to the Queries.

Now came the more open outbreak of a party which had for several years been more or less covertly sapping the vitality and paralyzing the energies of the Society in that island. It manifested itself in many places by undisguised declarations of unbelief in the authenticity and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and even a denial of the truthfulness of many parts of Scripture

* "Friends' Library," vol. i, p. 440.

history; a discarding of the doctrine of the atonement by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; a general spirit of speculation and unbelief; a vaunting tone of self-importance in the assumption of divine guidance as reformers of the Society, without adequate marks of self-reform in their own life and conversation; and, at the same time, persistent attempts to do away with the comely order of the discipline long established among Friends.

Abraham Shackleton, in a written communication to one of his fellow elders, declared his disbelief that the Almighty ever countenanced various things mentioned in the Books of Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and others; charging the original writers with "muddying the fountain," and with "pretending to a divine revelation," alleged that the Scriptures contain a "mass of impurity," and "resemble the cloud which conceals the sun from our eyes;" and accused the Apostle Paul of "carrying much of his Rabbinical veneration for Jewish monuments of tradition, into Christianity with him."

One Samuel Stephens openly and in writing denied the divinity of Christ, looking on Him as a mere man, and saying, "I cannot swallow down the *absurd* doctrine, that He was God!"

John Hancock, a minister of Lisburn, published a pamphlet, in which, among other erroneous sentiments, and some plausible insinuations, he denied a belief "of the fall of Adam having had any effect upon" himself, and put forth his belief that Christ was merely a man, but with "the Spirit of God poured forth upon Him without measure." Afterwards, in another pamphlet, he attacked the character of the Apostles, and spoke of

the Scriptures as being the origin of "a large mass of errors," by men taking them "as unmixed truth."*

A very considerable number of the ministers and elders had become infected with this spirit; and, as a consequence of this, a still larger number of the general members, both young and old. It is impossible at the present time, to know how much private labor may have been bestowed by faithful and deeply concerned individuals for the restoration of the lapsed parties. Doubtless this was very considerable; but it would seem that, for a time, the preponderance of the unsound element, or at least its clamorous opposition, rendered it impracticable, in several of the meetings, to make a firm, open, and prompt stand, as a body, against the fearful defection.

The Yearly Meeting, however, succeeded in 1798 in sending down advice to the subordinate meetings, that those who "manifested opinions contrary to the general sense of the body," should be labored with to reclaim them; and if persisting in their errors, "after due labor and patience," they should be testified against. And a committee was also appointed to visit the subordinate meetings.

David Sands, from the Yearly Meeting of New York, was travelling in Ireland about this time in the service of the gospel; and being very clear in his appreciation of these disorders, and unflinchingly faithful in his public testimonies against them, and the wild spirit of unbelief

* Yet S. M. Janney (though admitting that he held some particular doctrinal views, without saying what they were) says that "he appears to have been an exemplary and conscientious man!" Janney's "History of Friends," vol. iv, p. 28.

which was producing them, he became a particular mark for the arrows of the disaffected. They accused him of pretending to know their states by revelation, and many would not openly unite with his offerings in supplication by standing with heads uncovered. One John Bewley went so far in his animosity against this highly gifted minister, as to make an attack upon him in a scurrilous paper addressed to the Select Yearly Meeting; mentioning him by name, and exclaiming, "Search him, ye elders, sift him, bring him to the touch! If too much alloy debases his composition, do not by your certificate pass it further upon the public as sterling!" Of course the meeting declined to read such a paper.

Hannah Barnard, another minister from the Yearly Meeting of New York, but of a very different spirit from David Sands, was also, during part of this year and the two following, travelling in Ireland; having through the weakness and false tenderness of her friends at home been at length, after considerable reluctance and delay, liberated by the Monthly Meeting of Hudson for a religious visit to Europe. Soon developing sorrowful unsoundness of principle, she did much mischief in Ireland, greatly encouraging the spirit of unbelief and disorder by her public declarations.

Hannah Jenkins was born about the year 1754, of parents who were members of the Baptist Society; but she joined Friends about the eighteenth year of her age, and afterwards married Peter Barnard, of Hudson, in the State of New York. Whether she had, during the twenty years of her ministry before she left America for Europe, manifested any of that unsoundness of doctrine,

which, after that, became so sorrowfully conspicuous, is not now clearly known. If she had done so, the members of her own Monthly Meeting must either have participated to some extent in the same views, or must have had very little capacity for judging what was, or what was not, pure Christian doctrine; for in their Certificate liberating her for service in Europe, they declared "that her ministry is sound and edifying." This Certificate was also sanctioned by the indorsement of her concern on the part of the Quarterly Meeting of Nine Partners, and by the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders of New York.*

She had, as companion, Elizabeth Coggeshall, a worthy minister from Rhode Island; but it does not appear that there was any participation on her part, in the unsound views of Hannah Barnard. It seems not unlikely, that

* By the following passage from the Journal of Henry Hull, it would appear that she was in good and general esteem for some years after coming forth in the ministry. It seems probable that unwatchfulness gradually increased upon her, and that in this condition going among the dissentients in Ireland, she rapidly imbibed their views, and made them her own. Henry Hull says that he travelled in 1793, to some places in Connecticut in company with her; and adds: "She had passed through much exercise of mind to prepare her for the work of the ministry, and evinced much love and zeal for the cause of religion. . . . . She travelled some long journeys in the work of the gospel. But after all her dedication to the Lord's cause, she fell away and caused Friends much trouble, imbibing and promulgating principles inconsistent with what she had once so zealously propagated. . . . Several years before she fell away, I had fears on her account, having frequently been in her company, and had opportunity of seeing the temptation to which she was exposed. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall!" The Friend, Philadelphia, vol. 34, p. 89.

the latter, being of a bold and speculative nature, through great unwatchfulness was caught by the spirit of infidelity then afloat in Ireland, under the plausible pretence of reformation, and being at once taken by the hand, caressed and flattered, by the disaffected there, that she gave herself away to them, adopted their sentiments, and so more fully developed any latent unsoundness that may have been secretly insinuating itself into her mind, before leaving her home.

She landed at Falmouth in the seventh month, 1798, and soon proceeded to Ireland, where she greatly increased the trials by which the faithful members were almost overwhelmed.

Many had by this time become fully awake to the state of the Society, and some were prepared to stand faithfully for the maintenance of sound principles and practice. We have seen that the Yearly Meeting of 1798 issued advice for the encouragement of the members and meetings to put the discipline in practice against the schism. After that Yearly Meeting, accordingly, Friends felt somewhat more animated to proceed; and a large number of the most disorderly members were dealt with by their Monthly Meetings and eventually disowned, including many in the station of elders or overseers, and several acknowledged ministers. The honest-hearted, having now to stem the tide of open schism, were brought into many trials, and had to wade through great difficulties for two or three years, in their conscientious endeavors to sustain the testimonies and discipline of the Society. In some meetings this could scarcely be accomplished. The weakness in the body at large was great and obvious, especially as so many of those who ought

to have stood forward in defence of the truth, in their positions as ministers, elders, or overseers of the flock, had joined more or less in the defection. Without taking this particular circumstance into view, it would be difficult to account for the fact that the Select Yearly Meeting of Dublin, in 1800, preparatory to Hannah Barnard's passing over to England, was induced by some means to issue a clear returning minute on her behalf, certifying that they believed "it was her concern, by example and precept, to inculcate the doctrines of the gospel," during her religious labors among them, and that "she had meetings with those of other Societies in several parts," they believed, "to general satisfaction." Surely the meeting must have been borne down at this time by the pressure of the spirit of opposition, so that a true judgment could not be arrived at, but evil was called good. Although many had been disowned, or had left the meetings of the Society, yet it seems that enough had assembled on that occasion, of the sympathizers with the schism, to control the Select Yearly Meeting, at least so far as to turn judgment backward, and prevent its right action against this popular preacher.

It is evident that many of the meetings for discipline, and meetings of ministers and elders, had become much crippled by the large proportion of dissentients. In Ulster Province it seemed almost impracticable, for a time, to sustain the discipline at all. In that Quarterly Meeting, all the elders were eventually released from their station; and in Leinster Quarter, all the elders of one of the Select Monthly Meetings. We may imagine from this what devastation was the result among the members at large.

Abraham Shackleton, whose influence was very considerable as an elder, and on account of the great veneration still felt for the memory of his father and grandfather, was probably one engaged with others in turning aside the judgment of the Select Yearly Meeting, on that occasion, in the case of Hannah Barnard. He appears to have had full swing for carrying on his schismatic efforts until the year 1801, when he was at length taken under dealing by the Monthly Meeting of Carlow, of which he was a member. He now addressed a paper to that Monthly Meeting, couched in grievously bitter language, in which he manifested very erroneous and dangerous sentiments; declaring his disunity with the Discipline, and his belief that "a distinct Society ought not to exist," nor "any book having particular dogmas of belief, by which that Society is to be distinguished;" and charging what he called "your Bibles" with containing "absurdities," which were "sufficient indication to any unprejudiced mind for their annihilation; that religion may flow as freely as the light of day, from man to man, from heaven to earth!" This letter was (it is hardly needful to say) deemed unfit to be read in the Monthly Meeting, and he was disowned from membership.

After many deeply trying circumstances, report was at length made, at the Yearly Meeting in 1802, by the committee previously appointed to aid Friends in supporting the discipline, that visits had been paid by them to most of the meetings for discipline, and many of the particular meetings for worship, and that they had often been made sensible of the affecting state of the Society under various causes for discouragement; but were apprehensive

nevertheless that "divers well-disposed Friends give way too much thereto, and instead of making use of the ability afforded, seem too prone to sink under the present gloom." It was, however, reported to the meeting at this time, especially from Ulster Province, that the discipline had in a good degree been carried into effect, so as to reach most of the cases of disorder.

The editor of the *Journal of William Savery* (the late Jonathan Evans of Philadelphia) says, respecting the parties engaged in this schism, when alluding to some of William Savery's exercising labors while travelling among them, that "a great withering and falling away overtook nearly all of them, and upon some of the principal promulgators of those unrighteous doctrines an awful blast was evidently brought." Many of these poor deluded people eventually lost ground greatly in their outward circumstances, and even in their moral character, some even so far as to excite the surprise and pity of their acquaintances. Yet others, by taking timely warning, and co-operating with the reproofs and instructions of divine mercy, were enabled to retrace their steps to favor with the Most High, and to a reunion with the faithful in Israel.

As to Hannah Barnard, she went over to England, and attended the Yearly Meeting in London in 1800. Here Elizabeth Coggeshall, probably having become uneasy with her position as companion to one who had proved herself not sound in the Christian faith, proposed to part from her, and was liberated to travel on the continent of Europe. Hannah Barnard hereupon proposed to accompany her; but this was objected to in the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders; David Sands and

Joseph Williams (an elder from Ireland) taking that occasion to make known to Friends the deep exercise and trial which her unsound sentiments had produced to faithful Friends in Ireland. This brought the matter to a point that could not be evaded. A committee was appointed in the Select Yearly Meeting to confer with her on the subject of these complaints; on whose report, as they found it impossible to clear her from the charge, the case was referred to the "Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders." This meeting found her expressed sentiments on divers points of doctrine so objectionable, that they advised her to forbear from any further exercising the function of a minister, and to return as speedily as practicable to her home. She declined to be governed by this advice, on the ground that the "Morning Meeting" was not possessed of disciplinary powers.* That meeting, therefore, transferred the case to the meeting in London, within which she had been making her home, by reporting her delinquency to the Monthly Meeting of Devonshire-house. Here a committee was appointed, and several opportunities were had with her on the subject, which, as before, resulted in her being advised to refrain from travelling or appearing further as a minister, and to return home.

She appealed against this advice, to the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex. Here she was patiently and fully heard, in pleading her own cause with considerable ability. Her declaration of faith or belief, delivered in the prosecution of her appeal, was of a

* See Beck and Ball's "Account of London Friends' Meetings," page 82. London, 1869.

remarkably wary, vague, and delusive character, covering up her true sentiments as she had often openly expressed them, but not at all clearing herself from them as now expressly charged against her. From the tenor of this document it is evident, cover it up as she would, that she did not believe in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, or in the fall of man, according to the belief of Friends. And in regard to other doctrines, on which she was accused of unsoundness in her ministry, it was her duty now, as professing to hold so responsible a position in the church, to clear herself, if possible, from the imputation; but this she signally failed to do, and indeed does not appear to have even attempted.

The Quarterly Meeting confirmed the judgment of Devonshire-house Monthly Meeting; and Hannah Barnard then appealed to London Yearly Meeting of 1801. The Quarterly Meeting's Committee of Respondents, appointed to appear on its behalf, was composed of six members of eminent ability, viz.: William Forster, William Dillwyn, Joseph G. Bevan, Frederick Smith, Sparks Moline, and Richard Phillips. The committee appointed by the Yearly Meeting out of the different Quarters, to hear the appeal, and report their judgment, went carefully into the subject, as one of great importance both to the church and the individual implicated; and finally reported to the Yearly Meeting, that "it appears to us, that the said Hannah Barnard does not unite with our Society in its belief of the Holy Scriptures, the truth of which, in several important instances, she does not acknowledge; particularly those parts of the Old Testament which assert that the Almighty commanded the Israelites to make war upon other nations; and various parts of

the New Testament, relating to miracles, and the miraculous conception of Christ;" and that they were, therefore, unanimously of the judgment that the proceedings of the Monthly Meeting should be confirmed.

I have in my possession a letter of this date from my father, who was attending the Yearly Meeting, to Thomas Scattergood, under whose powerful ministry in some remarkable meetings at Sheffield he had been convinced of the truth, and induced to join in membership with Friends. By this letter, which contains a circumstantial account of what passed, it appears that on the 1st of sixth month the report of the Committee on Hannah Barnard's Appeal was produced to the Yearly Meeting, and read in her presence; that she objected to it, and, at considerable length, urged to be heard before the Yearly Meeting at large; that this was, with remarkable cogency, objected to, and shown to be improper and inadmissible, by Joseph G. Bevan, on the part of the respondents of the Quarterly Meeting; that the meeting sustained these views, and informed her that she could not be allowed to reopen her case there, after it had been fully and fairly heard in the committee;* but the

* The minute of the Yearly Meeting (as found in L. Howard's "Yorkshireman," vol. v, p. 25) says that "the appellant having expressed dissatisfaction with the said report, this meeting proceeded to read the Appeal, and to hear *what further* the said Hannah Barnard was disposed to offer, and also to hear the respondents thereon. The appellant and respondents then withdrawing, this meeting proceeded in further deliberation on the case, and is of the solid judgment, that the said report ought to be confirmed; and this meeting doth hereby accordingly confirm the same." The hearing of the appellant in the Yearly Meeting does not appear to have been by any means a reopening of the case at large, but merely a hearing what she had to say, why the report should not be confirmed.

Yearly Meeting also decided, that in coming to a conclusion in this case, it would be best for not only the members of the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings appealed against, but also for all ministers and elders, to abstain from giving a judgment. This was probably on account of the case having been previously considered and acted upon by the Select Yearly Meeting of the year previous, and by the Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders, who might therefore be considered as having to some extent already adjudged the case, and decided against her. It was thus left to the judgment of the generality of the members from the meetings in the country; and my father's letter declares that it was soon decided, *without any opposing expression*, to accept the judgment of the committee, confirming the action of the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings. Hannah Barnard was consequently, by the Yearly Meeting itself, admonished to return to her own home.

Finding her way now shut up in Europe, she at length prepared to return to America. The Meeting for Sufferings, by a committee appointed for the purpose, offered to supply the expense of her voyage homewards; but she refused to accept the offer; and sailing from England near the end of the eighth month, she reached her home early in the eleventh month, after a passage of sixty-three days. London Yearly Meeting had directed that ample information of her unsoundness of principle, and of the consequent proceedings had, in her case, should be transmitted by Devonshire-house Monthly Meeting without delay to the Monthly Meeting of Hudson, where she belonged; and, owing to the delay in her departure, and her subsequent very long voyage, the documents

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containing this information had preceded her arrival at home, and had indeed been read in the Monthly Meeting. She attended the next Monthly Meeting after her arrival, and attempted to vindicate herself; but a committee was appointed to attend to the case as usual. This committee is said to have had no less than six conferences with her, to endeavor to reclaim her, previous to the Monthly Meeting in the first month, 1802, when she was, by conclusion of the meeting, displaced from her station as an acknowledged minister. From this conclusion she appealed to the Quarterly Meeting, which met at Stanford on the 13th of the second month; and there she attempted to defend herself by the altogether unfounded allegation, of views similar to her own having been expressed by some of our early Friends. Her defence, however, abundantly confirmed the charges of unsound sentiments, and the next Quarterly Meeting (in the fifth month) confirmed the judgment of the Monthly Meeting. Meantime, the Monthly Meeting, without waiting for the decision of the Quarter on her appeal from their displacement of her as a minister, and finding that she still persisted in her errors, had taken up the case with reference to her membership in the Society, and appointed a committee to visit her as a transgressor; and on the report of this committee, in the fourth month, a testimony of disownment was issued against her. In this they declared, that "she hath not only imbibed those erro-
"neous and dangerous sentiments, but is assiduous in
"disseminating them among others; hence it evidently
"appears that she is not one with us, in principle nor
"in practice," and . . . . "she still continuing to pro-
"mote the ideas she had formed, and strenuously defend

"the ground she had taken," . . . . "and there appear-
"ing no prospect of advantage from further forbearance
"or labor; we, therefore, for the support," etc. . . . .
"by bearing our testimony against a spirit of infidelity,
"which appears evidently to have gained too great an
"ascendency in the present day, hereby testify that we
"can no longer hold religious fellowship with the said
"Hannah Barnard, but disown her from being any
"longer a member of our Society, until, etc. . . .

"Signed, etc., etc., by

"TIDDEMAN HULL,
"HANNAH JENKINS,
"Clerks."

Thus, the Monthly Meeting vindicated itself, as a body, from any complicity in her errors. Hannah Barnard is said to have survived her separation from Friends about twenty-six years;* dying, in comparative obscurity, in the year 1828, without ever having been reunited to the Society.

The Society in Ireland had become much diminished and weakened by this sorrowful schism; and in England a few individuals became partisans of Hannah Barnard, and advocated similar views to some extent. William Rathbone, of Liverpool, published, in 1804, a "Narrative of Events in Ireland," etc., already alluded to, giving his version of these sad occurrences in such a manner as to show plainly that he was not himself one in faith with Friends. He had, indeed, been honestly and plainly labored with on these subjects by Job Scott while in Ireland, in a letter dated eighth month, 31st, 1793, though

* Luke Howard's "Yorkshireman," vol. v, page 77.

with great apparent want of candor, his book insinuates as if he thought Job Scott was one with him in principle. This appearing after Job Scott's decease, ought to have been clearly contradicted by Friends, as it was calculated to produce an erroneous impression respecting the soundness of doctrine of that deeply experienced minister of the gospel.

There were not wanting some unsettled minds in and about London also, to fan the flames of this spirit, and encourage Hannah Barnard's apostasy, though these were but few. The chief among them were G. H., a respectable lawyer of London, who I think never left the Society, and Thomas Foster, of Bromley, a suburb of that city, a man of considerable ability for disputation; who, a few years after, openly favoring Unitarian sentiments, and aiding the circulation of some of the books of that Society, and likewise publishing attacks on the course of London Yearly Meeting in such a way as to show that he was not united with Friends' principles, was disowned by Ratcliffe Monthly Meeting in London, of which he was a member. He contended the matter before the Monthly Meeting for a long time, with uncommon tenacity and litigiousness, and then appealed to the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex. Here, notwithstanding his strenuous efforts, the judgment of the Monthly Meeting was confirmed by the Quarter in the eleventh month, 1812. Upon this he resorted to the press, publishing his own version of the successive proceedings of the meetings, and even detailing his own factious attempts to stumble the weak members of committees, and giving in full (or professedly so) the various remarks made in the course of the debates ensuing when-

ever the matter came up before the Monthly Meeting, for a period of many months, during which he had succeeded in baffling the exercise of the discipline. But his octavo volume, now seldom heard of, mainly evinced that the author had paraded himself before the public as a troublesome mischief-making man, and a very unsound member of the Society, and had plainly shown that it would have been much better for the meeting, if it could have cleared itself more promptly from the reproach of his inconsistencies, by disowning him long before it did.

He now appealed to the Yearly Meeting; where, as usual in such cases, a committee was appointed from all the Quarters except the one appealed against, to hear the appellant and respondents, and give their judgment thereon for the information and action of the Yearly Meeting. This committee (of twenty-seven Friends) after a full investigation of the case, reported their unanimous judgment, that the disownment ought to be confirmed. The appellant, however, was not yet satisfied to give up the contention, in which he seemed to take a particular satisfaction; and as it was an appeal connected with faith and doctrine, he claimed the right of being heard again, before the Yearly Meeting at large.* It was a very

* It appears probable, from comparing the action of the Yearly Meeting in this case, with its denial of the same demand made by Hannah Barnard, in 1801, that the present regulation of the English Discipline, to allow appeals on questions of faith and doctrine to be heard in the meeting at large, instead of before a committee, must have been adopted in the *interim*. L. Howard, (Yorkshireman, vol. v, p. 134), says it "was *the practice* in 1802;" but the later Books of Extracts or books of Discipline, give no in-

trying occasion, he being a fluent man, and well calculated, by his sophistical speeches, to catch and bewilder the inexperienced and unwatchful. But there was no help for it, and the whole case was opened at large in that great and mixed assembly of old and young, experienced and flippant, and the cause of Latitudinarianism (for it amounted to that in fact—the Unitarian views being somewhat artfully covered up), sustained by him in a long and insinuating speech, in his own defence. This had, of course, to be met on the part of the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings by a considerable body of evidence, to show the correct grounds of their procedure, and to prove the uniform faith of the Society of Friends in the divinity and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the entire incongruity and inconsistency thereof with the views of the Unitarians, whose publications Foster had for years actively promoted.

This statement of the respondents of the Quarterly Meeting was read by Josiah Forster (probably written by him), and contained the following instructive remarks towards the close:

"The appellant has repeatedly alleged that he never "denied the eternal divinity of that power which dwelt "in and acted by or through the Man Christ Jesus. "But in this we can discover no acknowledgment of the "divinity of our Lord which would imply that He dif- "fers (except in the degree or measure of the power "conferred), from eminently gifted servants, from the "Prophets, and the Apostles. How remote from this is

dication when the rule was established; and there is no allusion to such a practice in the Book of Extracts of the Second Edition, printed in 1802.

"the manner in which our ancient Friends, the instru-
"ments under Providence in gathering and establishing
"our Society, understood those passages in Scripture,
"which speak of Christ as the Word which was in the
"beginning with God, and was God—which make men-
"tion of the glory that He had with the Father before
"the world was; of the creation by Him of all things that
"are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisi-
"ble—which affirm that all things were created by Him
"and for Him, that He is before all things, and that by
"Him all things consist—which speak of His coming
"down from heaven; of His being in the form of God,
"thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, yet
"making Himself of no reputation, and taking on Him
"the form of a servant—which designate Him as the
"Son, whom God hath appointed heir of all things, by
"whom also he made the worlds; who being the bright-
"ness of His glory, and the express image of His person
"(or substance), and upholding all things by the word
"of His power, when He had by Himself purged our
"sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on
"high; as the Lamb that was slain, to whom, jointly
"with Him that sitteth on the throne, is ascribed bless-
"ing and honor, and glory and power, forever and ever!"

We might well say, how different is this development of the divine character of our Lord Jesus Christ, taken as it is from Holy Scripture, from the cold and evasive allusions to Him, and even the glaring denials of His oneness with the Father, often made by the appellant in common with the Unitarians, with the Barnardites, the New England "New Lights," and the disciples of Elias Hicks.

The Yearly Meeting had been occupied with the case on four successive days, and on the 26th of the fifth month the appellant, apparently expecting an adverse judgment, requested that he might be furnished with "an explanation of *the grounds* of [the committee's] decision." To this, however, the meeting replied, that they did not think it necessary to call upon the committee for any explanation of "the grounds" of their decision, nor did it "rest with either the appellant or respondents to call for such explanation at any time." Luke Howard's account of the transaction* says that he attempted to sustain his views by quotations from the Scriptures; "though, as was justly urged by the respondents, the question was, not whether he could prove his opinions by texts of Scripture; but *whether they were in accordance, or at variance, with the acknowledged doctrine of the Society.*"

After both parties had been fully heard they withdrew, leaving the meeting to come to its decision. A solemn silence ensued for a considerable time, under a prevailing sense of the weightiness of the subject, as connected with the integrity of the church, and the necessity of sustaining its testimony for the truth and against error. At length, William Grover, a venerable and worthy elder, from Essex, first broke this deep silence in a very few but impressive words, to the effect, that he was of the mind that the judgment of the Monthly Meeting ought to be confirmed. A general and uncommonly full expression now took place over the whole meeting, extending from the older Friends to the middle-aged, and even including the younger members; and it

* Yorkshireman, vol. v, p. 146.

was remarkable that, in that large assembly of probably more than one thousand Friends, a unanimous voice was given (so far as anything at all was expressed) for the confirmation of Thomas Foster's disownment, and the clearing of the Society from the reproach of his unsound principles.

It appears by a letter from John Bevans, of London, to his friend Thomas Scattergood, after his return home to Philadelphia, dated second month 1st, 1805,* that Thomas Foster had been far otherwise than alone, in that city and its neighborhood, in disaffection and a disposition to bring in unsound doctrines. This letter says: "Trying times have been the portion of many brethren on this side the water since thou left us. Thyself and others have had your perils by land and perils by water; but ours have been by false brethren, who, by fair speeches and great pretensions to liberality, have deceived and misled some in many places. But I hope the firmness of Friends, pretty generally on this side the water and on yours, will in good measure put a stop to this delusive spirit. . . . . Perhaps thou mayest know that some of the disaffected among us have been very active, and have published several pieces, greatly misrepresenting the conduct of Society in the case of H. B.; and also, by mutilating the writings of our ancient Friends, have made them to speak a language they neither intended nor thought of. They have likewise endeavored to invalidate several parts of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The above publications have much tendency to turn the feet of the unwary

* "Journal of Thomas Scattergood," stereotype edit., p. 457.

out of the right way, making the offence of the cross to cease, and the path wide enough for the old corrupt man to walk safely in, without danger of alarm, it being in their view sufficient to preserve a fair moral conduct before men, without being shackled with the notions of a new birth from above, and the necessity of an inward and vital change, which the humble self-denying Christian considers essential to his eternal well-being. They tell us our reason is the primary gift of God, and able to guide us safely along, in all that is necessary to salvation, rejecting the sacrifice and atonement of Christ as absurd." . . . .

CHAPTER III.

THE OUTBREAK OF "NEW LIGHTS," OR RANTERS, IN NEW ENGLAND.

About the year 1817, in some parts of New England, considerable unsettlement of a number of restless members began to give trouble to the well-concerned in the Society. This unsettlement, though at first somewhat latent in its character, not being duly met and promptly checked by those whose province it was to watch over one another for good, and see to the welfare of the body, gradually gained strength, and, by the year 1820, showed itself openly in various disorderly appearances, which, for about four years longer, ceased not to render the solemn meetings of the Society, in New Bedford, Salem, and Lynn, in the State of Massachusetts, scenes of frequent reproachful disturbance by a party of ranting spirits, who took advantage of the forbearance and weakness of those who for a time tolerated their intrusion.

Most of these disturbers were at first members of the Society, who, on being admonished, and at length disowned from the body, still continued their unwarrantable imposition upon the meetings both for worship and discipline, countenanced, more or less, by weak and superficial individuals, into whose favor they had insinuated themselves. Our knowledge of the particular features of this schism, at the present day, may be mainly

derived from a manuscript account or diary left by Job Otis, then of New Bedford, which is the only connected narrative of it that I have any knowledge of. It has been already referred to as a book of more than six hundred pages of closely written matter, and must have been a work of no small labor and diligence. The following chapter will be chiefly, though not exclusively, a condensation of that account, and although of a deeply painful nature, will not, it is believed, be found void of interest and instructive warning. Religious history teaches us by its awful warnings, as well as by its animating examples, as is plentifully evinced in the histories included in the Holy Scriptures.

One of the most influential instruments for mischief among these dissentients was Mary Rotch, of New Bedford, though not openly prominent therein quite so early as some of the others. She occupied the station of an Elder, and had been considered by discerning members as a woman of fair promise for usefulness in the church. But she possessed rank and influence in the world, and had considerable talents, a lively imagination, a strong will and ardent disposition; and from having shared largely in the privileges of association with eminent members of the Society, was well versed in its affairs, and allowed these advantages to take too much the place of an unreserved yielding of her heart and soul, in humility and watchful obedience, to the divine will.

Mary Newhall, of Lynn, was a more active and openly offensive partisan and promoter of disturbance. She too possessed talents, and had been a minister in good esteem as well gifted for the work of the gospel.

But giving way to exalted imaginations and a self-righteous spirit, she began about this time to denounce the faithful Friends with much arrogance and bitterness, and eventually became one of the greatest opponents of the way of truth and gospel order.

Perhaps, however, the most active and mischievous among those who took an early part in these disorders, was one Micah H. Ruggles, a man of about thirty years of age at that time. Job Otis, who knew him well, says of him, that "his natural abilities were rather above mediocrity," "his disposition naturally active and forward," "ardent and unstable in his character," and "had professed several forms of religion, and manifested an intemperate zeal in the support of them all," "very impatient of restraint, and fond of taking the lead in whatever he undertook." While following the course and seeking the gratifications of the world, this man it is added, "was preciously visited with a 'day-spring from on high,' as was said, whereby he became convinced of the reality of divine revelation, and of the immediate work of God by his Spirit upon the soul of man. Here his understanding became measurably opened, like the man whose eyes had been anointed with clay, and was yet to have the earthy part washed off, to see clearly. He could see men as trees; he could see that *the world* of Christian professors, with all their high pretensions to religion, were still strangers to the work of God, by Christ, in the soul—that they were living as without God in the world, without any realizing sense or true experience of Him, and of his work in their hearts—that their religious creeds, ceremonies, and outward performances, were of human invention, and stood altogether

in the will and wisdom of man. He clearly saw a better way, and felt the call thereunto, under a conviction that 'what was to be known of God, was manifest in man,' by the teachings of the Spirit of Grace. As one suddenly waked up out of sleep, and hardly knowing where he is, or what is about him, so he seemed confused and somewhat incoherent in his views, and as though he thought he had already come to a greater knowledge of the way of life and salvation, than was possessed by any one else. He appeared to see some things with a degree of clearness, and to manifest a degree of readiness to give up to the heavenly vision, as it respected himself. But, alas, for him! making haste to be rich in heavenly treasure, and to be wise and knowing above what was made known to him, and above what was written in the Scriptures of truth and in other writings of the saints, and those of large experience; and endeavoring to comprehend divine and spiritual things (that are hid from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed unto babes) in the natural understanding; he soon became vain in his imagination, and his foolish heart was darkened. Instead of receiving the ingrafted word with meekness, and settling down within himself to the grace and gift of God revealed in him (whereby he might have experienced the work of sanctification to be carried on to its thorough accomplishment, viz., a death in the natural, and life in the spiritual creation), he still retained a life in the natural unregenerate will. And here, mistaking imagination for revelation, the workings of the flesh for those of the Spirit of life, he became self-righteous and exalted above measure; and thus the innocent life in him was soon overborne and

lost sight of. Here he talked large, pretended to a great deal of revelation, and to have divine impulses for everything, the most indifferent and trivial."

He soon became acquainted with some superficial members of the Society, who were caught by his high pretensions; and he followed this up by professing to have received a command to request membership among Friends. Through the influence of his new acquaintances, Micah was at length—though with great reluctance on the part of some discerning ones—admitted into membership "out of condescension to the weak," as the above-quoted writer remarks, "and as an expedient to preserve the peace of the Society." The effect of this "expedient" very soon became manifest. Micah in a little time undertook to preach. His discourses were such as might have been expected—an incoherent incongruous medley of some things which he had really learned in his best condition, when favored with a little anointing of the spiritual eye, mixed with what he had gathered in the natural understanding from the writings of Friends, and with the products and wild vagaries of an excited imagination, and arrogant assumptions of divine authority. And, as is usual in such cases, he found it much easier to utter denunciations against his fellows, than to preach the gospel of peace and good will to men.*

* John Comly in the Journal of his Life (p. 267) speaks of Micah Ruggles as having been "a military captain," and as "a young man of uncommon activity and energy of mind," as having been remarkably awakened about 1816, and as then (1818) "just coming forth in testimony in meetings, in the simplicity of a little child" (p. 268). He speaks of the troubles in New England with an appearance of leaning towards those who produced the sad dis-

Mary Newhall soon became an active partisan of this man, disturbing the meetings of Friends at Lynn with her unsavory and denunciatory harangues; and Mary Rotch likewise becoming captivated by his high-toned assumptions, suffered her judgment to be bewildered, and her imagination and affections to be excited in his favor, to such a degree that she became completely estranged from her judicious friends, and carried off the ground of truth and safety.

Micah Ruggles, early in the year 1820, undertook to travel through Providence, New York, and Philadelphia to Washington; spreading at each place as he went, his pernicious and reproachful sentiments. In New York he was particularly abusive on Friends, telling them that they knew no more than monkeys, and charging them with all manner of immoralities. His conduct in Washington City does not appear to have been recorded. But respecting his stay in Philadelphia, we have the following interesting and instructive letter from Jonathan Evans, an elder of that city, to Moses Brown, of Providence, Rhode Island, dated fourth month 3d, 1820.

"Beloved Friend: Micah H. Ruggles having ar-
"rived in this city (my mind having been previously
"exercised on account of the dangerous doctrines which
"certain persons from the eastward have lately broached
"amongst us), I felt so much sympathy with solid
"friends in New England, that I had sat down to ad-
"dress a few lines to thee on the occasion, that at least

turbances there, and connects those disturbances with what subsequently occurred in Pennsylvania and elsewhere (p. 303), the cause being in his view, "jealousy" and "stretch of arbitrary power."

"we might mingle our feelings and exercises together, "under the very serious and painful prospect of things "as they exist in our once highly favored Society; but "concluded it might be better to defer it until an oppor- "tunity could be obtained with Micah. It now appears "incumbent on me to give thee what information I am "possessed of, in which a circumstantial detail will neces- "sarily lead into some considerable length.

"We received accounts of his attending a meeting for "worship in New York, wherein he spoke a long time, "and used very unbecoming language towards Friends, "and, as to ministry, said that they were too corrupt to "have any gospel ministry among them. Pretty soon "after his arrival here, he went to the Monthly Meeting "of Philadelphia, held at the Mulberry Street House, "which I felt an inclination to attend. There was, in "the early part of the meeting, a remarkable quiet "spread over us. A woman friend from Ohio, on a re- "ligious visit to these parts, appeared in humble rever- "ential supplication, which, through divine goodness, "was attended with considerable solemnity. Micah, as "soon as friends had again taken their seats, pulled off "his surtout and hat, and by his gestures seemed as if "he designed to make a pretty long speech; but sud- "denly sat down, hanging his head, and, as I thought, "was in some degree of confusion. And I had no "doubt, there was that prevailing in the meeting, that "restrained him from disturbing it. After friends had "proceeded to the further business of the meeting, he "again attempted to say something; but, upon uttering "a short sentence or two, seeming unable to get on, "again took his seat. He attended their meeting on the

"first-day following; was silent in the morning, but in "the afternoon spoke a considerable time, took his seat, "and after a little space of silence, rose again; at which "many in the meeting became very uneasy. He said a "good deal, and then made a full stop. Then Caleb "Peirce, an Elder, and a friend of a very mild diffident "disposition, and well esteemed by Friends, seeing the "meeting was much unsettled, said, 'If the friend could "now be easy to be quiet, I believe it would tend to the "quiet of the meeting.' Micah replied, 'Dost thou speak "to me, or to Him that sent me?' But Caleb making "no answer, he sat down, and the meeting broke up. "This account I have both from one of my sons who "was there, and from C. Peirce also. He has not been "at their meeting since, but has attended ours at Pine "Street, and without giving interruption. He after- "wards called on C. Peirce, and wanted to know "whether he was authorized to speak to him in the "meeting. Caleb said, he did not wish to say much, "but left it to his friends to judge. My being confined "with sickness prevented me from having conversation "with him, but Friends here being much concerned on "account of the sentiments and views he entertained, "and has at times expressed in conversation, it was "thought most advisable that an interview should be "had with him, particularly as he intimated an inten- "tion of going to Washington. He was accordingly "notified that two friends had appointed to meet him "at my house at nine o'clock the next day; and he also "told Dr. Moore in the afternoon, that he was to meet "friends at the time proposed. But on the morning of "the proposed meeting, he called upon Caleb Peirce,

"and said he was going to Washington, and declined "giving us the interview. Caleb endeavored to prevail "upon him to meet us, and put off his journey one day; "but Ruggles said he had been long enough in Phila- "delphia, and chose now to leave it. He also asked if "it was to be a religious opportunity. Caleb told him "that as he was a stranger, and was going to the seat of "government, Friends had a desire to speak with him; "that we did not incline to stamp our prospects so high "as the effect of immediate revelation. He then re- "plied, 'But I do choose to stamp my impressions as of "divine revelation.' He accordingly avoided us, and "went in the steamboat for Baltimore.

"Thus you may see, that so far from putting Friends "to a *non-plus*, there was no other conference than that "which I have stated, and that was with Caleb alone, "as is before expressed. After his return from Wash- "ington, as I was sitting in my son's shop, Ruggles "came in, and very freely entered into conversation with "William respecting his visit to the metropolis, of vari- "ous incidents that turned up there and in his journey; "and likewise gave some account of his first coming "among Friends, the state of his mind in his early "attending meetings in New Bedford, and some of his "prospects and experiences, laying particular stress on "what he calls *his impressions*. Finding that he was "much disposed for talking, and full in relation to what "he thought he had known, and feeling that there was "evidently a want of gravity and weightiness of spirit "in him, I sat silently hearing his various anecdotes; "and although none of them led to such a disclosure of "his sentiments as would exhibit a departure or differ-

"ence from what we hold, yet I was most easy just to "say, 'that I had always found it most safe to labor to "have a little bread in my own house, and not to talk "about my own experience (if I had any), unless par- "ticularly or unavoidably called upon for such an ex- "posure.' After which he went away. But still being "under some concern, and not knowing but he might "soon leave town, my son, at my request, left word at "his lodgings that I wished to see him; and on the "afternoon of seventh-day last, brought him to my "house. I mentioned that, having heard of his having "expressed sentiments to several of our young people, "which tended to lessen their esteem of the sacred writ- "ings, and to lead them into doubts of their authen- "ticity, and that he had also said something that gave "reason to apprehend he did not believe in the divinity "of Christ, and that he esteemed the account of it no "more than any other historical fact; that the hearing "of these things had occasioned me much distress and "pain; for it had always been our care and labor to "impress upon the minds of our youth and others the "necessity of endeavoring to work out their own salva- "tion with fear and trembling, without seeking to pry "into things which human wisdom could not fathom; "that as the principles and doctrines of our Society were "published to the world, and were well known, if he "were not one with us in principle, it would be candid "in him to declare himself; for, as William Penn re- "marks, we compel none to us, but those who profess "to be of us must walk conformably with our principles, "or be denied by us. That we highly esteemed the "offering and sacrifice of Christ as an atonement or pro-

"pitiation for the sins of the whole world; most firmly "believing in his divinity, and also in the authenticity "of the Holy Scriptures, they being written by divine "inspiration. It was then mentioned to him, that in "the days of George Fox there were persons in our "Society, pretending to be so under the immediate di- "rection of the light, that they could not be subject to "the care and oversight of their friends, and thus "thought to hold themselves clear of accountability to "the body; and by giving way to their imaginations "had separated themselves, and so far run out as to "make opposition to the ministers and elders, even in "public. That the same spirit of division having fre- "quently shown itself, had appeared of late time in "Ireland, and under very specious professions of more "enlightened views and knowledge, had found fault "with our order and discipline, arraigned the establish- "ment of our meetings, and manifested hostility to our "manner of worship. But that as faithful Friends kept "steadfast, these separatists came to nothing, and con- "fusion and misery swallowed many of them up. I "then opened to him the principles and judgment of "our ancient Friends, respecting the order and govern- "ment which ever belongs to the church of Christ. "That as all the individuals of the body were members "one of another, *we must be subject;* but as for going "about, or attempting to arraign the establishment of "meetings, or the ministry of those approved among "us, it was contrary to the order and rule instituted by "the Head of the Church. That if any were uneasy "with what was delivered, or with anything among us, "there was an orderly way of proceeding towards a

"remedy. He made no reply, though full time was "given him; nor did he ever attempt to deny the facts "alleged. And from what I can learn, he endeavors to "conceal his real sentiments from those he thinks will "investigate and reprove them, but chooses to insinuate "them into the minds of the incautious or inexperienced "youth.

"A woman Friend in the city informed me yesterday, "that in conversation with him, he expressed himself in "such a manner as really to shock her with astonish-"ment and disgust. He spoke very lightly of Christ; "from which she understood that he had but little or no "belief in his divinity; that, as for the Scriptures, they "were like the manna gathered yesterday, all worm-"eaten! And when she mentioned something about "our being preserved from unbelief, he treated it with "ridicule, saying, he supposed that if he was to believe "the account of Adam, Eve, etc., and such-like nonsense, "Friends would give him a passport to heaven!

"Friends here have no unity with him or his doctrine. "And I told him, that however such opinions as his "might do in New England, they would not be received "here; and advised him to return home; which has "also been repeatedly done by other Friends. As to his "pretending to an immediate impulse for whatever he "does or says, it can have very little effect with those "who will not take everything from him implicitly, but "endeavor to feel the ground and foundation of every "engagement; for it will soon be perceived, that, what-"ever he may say about his commission, very little "weight, solidity, or real exercise of spirit, is to be felt "about him.

"I much desire that faithful Friends everywhere may "stand firm against the subtle insinuations and ap- "proaches of this spirit, in its various transformations; "for we have no doubt here, that it is of the same origin "with that which has troubled the church at different "periods, and tends to the dissolution of every bond of "real union, and the subversion of all that is truly good "and comely in our religious Society.

"There is no doubt but his mind has been enlightened; "and had he received the unfoldings of truth in the "simplicity of a child, and retained them quietly, ap- "pointed for his own real benefit, until through divine "wisdom they might be brought forth to profit, it would "have been well. But, as our friend, Isaac Penington, "says, 'Catching at them, and taking them into the "'earthly part, a monstrous birth' has been produced. "And he is, I believe, taking imagination for revelation, "and by making use of strong or severe terms, would "force upon Friends that which is of spurious origin.

"With the feeling of brotherly love,

"I remain thy friend,

"JONATHAN EVANS."

Although the above letter is somewhat long, yet it is so instructive, that I have not felt free to do otherwise than give it here in full. It portrays in some degree, and in an interesting manner, the character of its writer, as a clear and prompt discerner of departures from our ancient faith and from the order of the gospel, and a vigilant watchman on the walls of Zion; and evinces the earnestness and integrity of his concern for the safety of the church, and his fitness for the duty which soon

afterwards devolved upon him, of withstanding prominently and with equal firmness, the more formidable outbreak of the same spirit, under the instrumentality of Elias Hicks and his coadjutors.

On Micah Ruggles's return home, he was admonished by some of the elders and overseers respecting his disorderly course. He appeared for the time to be considerably brought down, and denied holding sentiments, respecting the divinity of Christ, different from those held by the Society. But the same spirit of skepticism and disorder that actuated him had now gained ascendency in the hearts of many others in New England, and they encouraged one another to a continued repetition of outrages on the good order of the Society. It would require a large volume, to delineate the whole course of their proceedings during the five years that they thus broke in upon the solemn meetings of Friends with their ranting discourses and conduct. Job Otis's manuscript history of these transactions, and of the sore exercise thereby brought upon faithful Friends, details them minutely; he having been a witness of the sad disorders, and concerned firmly and openly to stand against them, and to encourage others to greater faithfulness in doing what they could to check them. We shall here have to be content with a succinct narrative of such portions of the whole, as are of special importance, in order to develop the awful workings of this spirit of anarchy.

Some or other of these deluded people made a frequent practice of intruding into the meetings for worship, and even into those for discipline after they had been disowned; and would insist on taking the raised seats appropriated to the ministers and elders; often

dressed in gay and prominently unseemly clothing; and would thence hold forth for a long time in a ranting manner, to the great exercise and grief of friends, and to the reproach of the truth.

Not only were the principles and practices of these people, in regard to outward conduct, very loose, and some of them quite disgraceful; but many of their doctrines as to matters of faith were exceedingly unsound. A pernicious periodical paper, entitled "The Celestial Magnet," published by one David B. Slack,* was freely circulated among them, and patronized by some of them; thus instilling its infidel principles into their families, and tending to the destruction of every tender green plant therein. They soon began to speak lightly of the Holy Scriptures, as we have seen in the case of M. H. Ruggles, and to discredit the divinity and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Religious exercise of mind for the arising of divine life in the soul was set at naught, as nothing but the restless workings of the natural mind, under the fallacious plea that the Almighty is sufficient of himself for his work in the salvation of mankind, without our co-operation or any earnest concern of soul on our part, and that we may leave it all to him. The mere light of nature, and the vagaries of an excited imagination, were confounded by them with the revelations of the Divine Spirit to the soul; and this led them into many extravagancies, in which they attempted to justify themselves with the presumptuous notion that they were divine requisitions; disregarding the admonitions at times administered, that God is a God of order,

* This paper was afterwards circulated, with expressions of approval, by Elias Hicks.

and will have order in his church, and that such proceedings tended to the breaking down of all order and church government. Such admonitions were of no avail, as they placed their own unbridled imaginations and wills far above the religious concern and solicitude of their friends. Heaven and hell they considered to be merely states of mind, to be experienced here on earth, and to be continued hereafter in the same degree. The existence of the devil as a distinct being was called in question; and the necessity of repentance for past sins was discarded; as they considered that with the *past* we have nothing to do, and even the experience gathered by the past was to be set aside as useless, so that the most recent and inexperienced in the religious life and walk were to be regarded as of equal standing with those of maturity in an acquaintance with the mysteries of the kingdom.

Mary Newhall, in her preaching, distinctly uttered the following pernicious sentiments: That "there is no devil, but that which is in man;" that "nothing can atone for sin, but sin in the flesh;" that "belief is no virtue, and unbelief no crime;" and that "we are not bound to believe what we cannot comprehend." One young man, who, in after life, was well known to the writer as a minister of the gospel, hearing these assertions of hers in his immaturity, and receiving them with a mistaken confidence in her integrity, as the words of a professed servant of the Lord, was brought to the verge of infidelity. But, after suffering unutterable distress, he was mercifully rescued from the dreadful precipice, and enabled to see the entire futility and wickedness of such views, and was never afterwards, it is believed,

troubled with doubts respecting the great truths of the Christian faith thus brought into question. But how many may have utterly fallen down that awful precipice under the same influences, we know not.

The tendency of their views and practices altogether was to the levelling of all distinctions, by an assumption of liberality, or latitudinarianism, and they constantly inveighed against "judging," and against the restrictions and obligations of the discipline, as rigid and superstitious, and behind the enlightenment of this age. It was very evident that in many things they were one with the followers of Hannah Barnard in Ireland, though perhaps advancing into greater extravagancies of conduct, notwithstanding the advantages which some of them had enjoyed, of good education and cultivated society.

One of the dissentients, Greely Hannaford, of Cape Elizabeth, in Maine, came in the capacity of a minister to New Bedford, about the beginning of 1822; and taking the head seat in the meeting, proceeded to compare the Society to a company of "Babel-builders;" and then addressed some whom he considered as "an army whom the Lord was raising up"—"who should make thorough work in the earth"—adding, that a reformation had already begun in the Society, which would be the riches of the world, and in its full accomplishment would break down the partition-wall that separates us from the world, the world over—that here there would be no need for any outward means of defence, for that the law was added because of transgression—that the Lord had shown him that this beautiful fabric (alluding, as it would seem, to the established order and discipline of the Society) which had been so long in building, was

to be pulled down and laid waste, so that one stone should not be left upon another. "Thus he went on," says the author of the manuscript before referred to, "casting abroad firebrands, arrows, and death."

When Friends undertook to put the discipline in practice against some of these gainsayers, a great outcry was raised about persecution, and several of them persisted in sitting in the meetings for discipline, after they had been complained against as disorderly walkers, and some even after they had been disowned. Others, hoping to avoid the disagreeable result of being disowned, offered to *resign* their membership; and strenuous attempts were made to sustain them in the assumption of a *right* to this mode of slipping out of responsibility, and securing immunity to themselves in their defection. In his relation of these circumstances, Job Otis makes some pertinent and clear observations respecting this supposed right of resigning membership in the Society—a claim often advocated in the present day.

Viewing the Society of Friends, "as part, at least, of "the visible church, deriving its obligations, its trust, "and its authority, from Christ, its spiritual Head," he says, "The Society, we are bound to believe, according "to our profession, is not a mere human institution, sub- "ject to the will of man; nor are its powers and obliga- "tions derived from man; for, if it be any part of the "true church, it is, as the apostle saith, 'The pillar and "'ground of the truth,' 1 Tim. iii, 15. Hence its obli- "gations cannot be dispensed with by man, at his will "and pleasure. They are all derived from, and to be "exercised in, Christ its head." . . . . "And these obli- "gations are not only to the great Head of the church,

"as the Author of all good, but they extend to the mem-
"bers of the church, in the relation they may respectively
"stand in and bear one to another, as members of one
"body. And from these obligations arise many duties,
"both civil and religious, to God and to our fellow-
"creatures, which no human power can exonerate us
"from; for they are due unto God, and unto His church
"and people. The duty of the body, in its collective
"capacity, under the influence and direction of Christ its
"head, is to watch over its members with a parental care
"and authority, for their good and its own peace and
"welfare; and, as far as in it lies, to restrain from evil.
"It can neither countenance nor allow anything that is
"injurious either to itself or to its members, or that is
"dishonorable or undutiful, either to itself, or to its
"Head. It cannot humor its refractory members, how-
"ever stubborn they may prove, to their own hurt or
"its own reproach and that of its acknowledged Head.
"It cannot be accessory to any evil and wrong, for that
"would be to implicate itself, and thus become accessory
"to its own degradation and shame. While it is true to
"itself, to its spiritual Head, and to the cause of truth,
"it will maintain its ascendency and its authority over
"its members, derived from Christ its Head, and will
"neither temporize with offenders, nor concede to any
"undutiful or wrong act in them.

"If membership be a religious privilege and blessing,
"and the body be a church of Christ, as we are bound
"to believe, and the natural guardian of its members;
"and, on the other hand, if it be an evil, and an outrage
"both to the church and the member in particular, and
"an open violation of duty and of trust, in any one to

"separate himself from the body, or to set himself in op-
"position and array against the church and her lawful
"authority, then it must be equally wrong for the body,
"whose duty it is to exercise a parental care and author-
"ity over its members, to consent to, or be at all acces-
"sory to this evil and wrong." . . . . "Should a mem-
"ber be so lost to his own best interest, and to a sense
"of duty, as to persist in separating himself from the
"Society, disregarding its admonitions and contemning
"its authority, then doubtless it will become necessary,
"for the clearing of truth and our profession, to disown
"such, and testify against them." . . . . "A member
"persisting in a request to be discharged from the Society,
"acting pursuant thereto, would from that moment with-
"draw himself from the Society, and should then be
"treated with as a delinquent. Taking upon himself to
"disown the Society, he no longer manifests a dutiful
"subjection and allegiance to it, and becomes an
"offender," etc.

A characteristic instance of the vulgar profanity of some of these deluded people, even in our solemn meetings, will serve to show the falsity of their pretensions of being engaged for the reformation of the Society. On one occasion, in a meeting at Salem, some move being made in order to give an aged Friend her accustomed seat, one B. Shaw cried out, 'Let the old —— sit where she will!' And when he was disowned for his profane and disorderly conduct, Mary Newhall undertook to plead his cause as an innocent man; and another of the party compared the proceedings of the meeting to the reign of Robespierre in the French revolution.

On one occasion, two of these men, Jonathan Buffum and D. Alley, after acting in a very unbecoming manner in the men's monthly meeting room, proceeded to intrude into the women's apartment, where they disturbed the meeting by their unsavory and impertinent interference. A letter from a friend of Lynn (E. Collins), dated second month 19th, 1822, gives some account of another instance of their wildness and recklessness.

"On fifth-day last was our Monthly Meeting—such "a one, I believe, as was never before witnessed in "America. B. Shaw was carried out before the meeting "was fully collected. J. Alley and J. Buffum took the "high seat, and compelled the Quarterly Meeting's Com- "mittee to take the left. . . . . In the early part of the "meeting, J. Buffum said: 'You who profess to be "Quakers, have shown the fruits of your hell-born prin- "ciples this day!' And again: 'This is spiritual cannibal- "ism—you thirst for our blood—you wish to feed upon "us!' M. Newhall spoke of the Quarterly Meeting's "Committee, and of the fruit of their advice, and said "to the meeting: 'You are drunk with the blood of the "saints—your garments have become loathsome!' etc. "About 12 o'clock the meeting became quietly settled "under great solemnity. The living part seemed to be "dipped into a feeling one for another, and for the cause, "in a remarkable degree. . . . Soon after, the meeting "proceeded to business. One of the Quarterly Meet- "ing's Committee spoke to business. J. Alley forbade "him, and ordered him to sit down. He declining, J. "Alley persisted, and raised his voice, saying, 'Sit "down, Benjamin Folsom,' and repeated it nearly twenty "times, with about as much extension of voice as he was

"capable of, and caused a suspension of business in both "meetings [being heard through the partitions]. Some "women were frightened, and left the meeting. Gen- "erally through the meeting, when any of the committee "attempted to express a sentiment, J. Alley would im- "mediately rise, and exclaim against them, extending "his voice so as to drown theirs. At intervals the meet- "ing would proceed with as much firm deliberation, I "believe, as at any former period." . . . . "Sixth-day "morning, J. Alley appeared publicly in the stores with "a large sword by his side, exclaiming against impo- "sition, calling out, 'Victory or death!' and repeated it "from place to place. . . . . Seventh-day, he appeared "without his sword, but said he would not be imposed "upon, he would carry his sword to meeting. Friends "concluded to warn and forbid J. Buffum and B. Shaw "from going into our meeting to conduct as they had "done in previous meetings; and accordingly drew up a "paper, setting forth their reasons for forbidding them. "Some Friends called to give them our reasons. J. "Buffum would hear but a part, and left the room. "On first-day morning, J. Alley appeared, with his "sword by his side. At early meeting-time people "began to collect about the meeting-house. Pretty soon, "those persons who had expressed themselves in such "awful language came up to the door, and halted a "little. Then J. Alley came forward with a quick and "ready step, and just as he was going up the gallery "stairs [steps], a Friend clasped him round his body and "arms; other Friends assisted, and soon took the sword "from him by cutting the belt and unclenching his hand "from the hilt. Such a scene, in a religious meeting,

"seemed enough to shock every feeling we were capable "of." . . . . "Friends thought best quietly to take "them out, if they should persist in such conduct. In "the afternoon they came forward as usual, and were "publicly warned and forbidden to go into the minis- "ters' gallery, to conduct as they had done. But they "treated Friends with contempt. The meeting was then "large, I believe between two and three hundred of "other societies present, merely to see what passed. "The people were requested to keep their seats, while "those disorderly persons were removed. Some Friends "were then called upon to remove them; which was "done, though not without considerable disturbance; "they refusing to go voluntarily, were carried out. An "officer was called, who took charge of them, in order "to have them bound over for their good behavior."

Thus far the letter. It is manifest that J. Alley was more or less affected with insanity; but what shall we say of the conduct of those who encouraged him, and promoted and aided these disorderly proceedings, by which a peaceful congregation was thus outraged in their lawful endeavor to wait publicly on the Lord their God?

The account given in a public paper of the date says, that "the justice found cause to order them to recognize "for their appearance at court. As they declined giving "bonds, which they seemed to consider would be an "acknowledgment of guilt, they were all committed, to "await their trial." It seems that four individuals were thus implicated, all of whom had been disowned by Friends, except J. Alley; and the removal was accomplished under the control of the overseers, and by the advice of the Quarterly Meeting's committee. A fifth

participator made his escape from the meeting, and left the town. The statements of various newspapers corroborate the foregoing narration, with the additional information, that at the trial of the four prisoners, "Buffum, Shaw, and Sprague pleaded 'not guilty;' "when the clerk put the question to Alley, he replied "with energy, 'I am guilty, and I am not guilty.' . . . . "Before the trial commenced, the county attorney entered "a *nolle prosequi* as to Alley, who was deemed insane."

It may here be observed, that Friends had, some time before, requested Alley's relations and friends to have the requisite care taken of him, to prevent his repeating his outrages upon their meetings, but to no purpose.

The newspaper account goes on to say that the other three were then put upon their trial. We need not pursue the details, further than to add, from the same authority (the *Salem Register*), that after much clear evidence to substantiate the facts on which they were arraigned, the case was given to the jury; and "after a luminous "statement of the facts and principles of law on which "the case depended, delivered by Judge How, the jury "retired, and in about two hours returned with a verdict "of Guilty on all counts against Jonathan Buffum and "Preserved Sprague, and an acquittal of B. S. by reason "of insanity." Buffum was, the next day, sentenced to pay a fine of one hundred and fifty dollars, and Sprague seventy-five dollars—the court taking into account the fact that they were almost destitute of property.

A Friend, then travelling in the ministry here, from England, George Withy, was witness to some of the disturbances at Lynn during that year; and in a public meeting held there in the eighth month, when a number

of the contentious individuals had been acting in their usual disorderly manner, he faithfully testified against them, informing the meeting, that though he had been in the ministry nearly forty years, and had travelled much in his own land and some thousands of miles in this, and had held meetings with all grades of people, down to negroes and Indians, yet he had never before witnessed such an outrage against the rules of decency, common sense, reason, and religion, as his eyes had beheld in that place. In the course of his communication he added, with the firmness and "boldness of speech" which characterized him: "I am far from wish-"ing to hurt the feelings of any one; I pity these poor "deluded individuals, who have been the cause of my "sore anguish. But who ever saw such an instance as "took place in the meeting I had here the other even-"ing, in the man that stood before me two hours and a "half, apparently for the purpose of disturbing? But "it did not move me any more than if he had been a "post. I thank God, I feel dominion of spirit over "these things, and move in a region above them all. "But many of more experience, and less confidence, or "more diffidence than myself, might have been so dis-"turbed, that the usefulness of the meeting might have "been frustrated, and all parties gone away dissatisfied. "And I bear my testimony against these things. I am "not ashamed to bear my testimony, in the name of the "Lord, against this desolating spirit, wherever I find it. "I feel much for the dear young people. . . . . And I "may now say, that I believe the time has fully come, "that patience has had its perfect work, and it is now "for the active members, both men and women, to unite

"and stand against these things, that there may not be "a repetition of them."

Mary Newhall, who had by this time been disowned, soon, with the co-operation of several adherents, set up a separate meeting at Lynn; which was for a time some relief to Friends there, in withdrawing her attempts at disturbance from their meetings; but this relief to the Society lasted only for a few months. In the beginning of 1823, she again appeared, at New Bedford, discoursing in Friends' meetings in her accustomed unsavory manner.

It appears from the manuscript diary of Job Otis, that a correspondence or intercourse was maintained between the dissentients in New England and some discontented and restless spirits in Pennsylvania and New York, who soon afterwards appeared openly as adherents of Elias Hicks. The above writer, who was an acute observer, has traced some features of similarity which would naturally tend to produce a bond of union, although the followers of Elias Hicks did not, generally, by any means sanction such gross outrages upon the discipline and order of the Society, as were perpetrated by that fanatical people in New England. Their disorderly acts were temporary, and under the excitement of a definite and in their view important aim, to wit, the possession of the meeting-houses, but not for the wanton purpose of disturbing meetings for divine worship, as were those of New England. Some of these features of agreement may be thus concisely stated: A mistaking of the dictates of mere imagination for the leadings of the Spirit of Truth, and then an undue exaltation of these supposed leadings of the Spirit over the dictates of the same divine Spirit in

the Scriptures and in holy men in all ages, heretofore fully acknowledged: a consequent disparagement of the authority of the Holy Scriptures: defective views of the necessity of repentance for past sins, leading to a disparagement of the value of the atoning sacrifice made by Christ our Saviour, and then to a denial of his glorious divinity and oneness with the Father: a fallacious idea that the standard of divine truth is always susceptible of advancement, so that we need not be bound by the experience of our forefathers, but should look for higher developments, different from what was revealed to them in the light of the unchangeable truth: an incorrect view of man's duty to serve the Almighty, discarding all motives founded on the hope of eternal reward, and restricting them merely to the disinterested love of God; thus diminishing the motives to a fear of "the wrath to come" for disobedience: a denial of the individual existence of the devil, any further than is found in our own carnal inclinations: a disposition to tamper with the wholesome gospel order long established, particularly in regard to the service of elders; desiring to reduce it to an annual appointment: and, finally, a constant inveighing against any settled statements of the faith of the Society, calling them "human creeds," framed in the will and wisdom of man, and an unwarrantable obstruction of the liberty of individuals to believe as they please.

It may naturally be queried, how was it that these gross disorders were allowed to go on so long without being suppressed? The answer is found in the fact, that a large proportion even of the well-disposed members, who were not themselves participators in the corrupt views and disorderly practices of these people, were

nevertheless more or less weak in their judgment of the depth of the evil, entangled in a false tenderness for the individuals or their family connections, and willing to give heed to any plausible extenuating suggestion, looking towards a gradual healing of the sore by indefinite patience and forbearance; thus forgetting the paramount duty of the church to maintain its purity and integrity, relying on the helping hand of the Great Head in every time of need, to enable it to sustain that authority which all truly living churches of Christ are intrusted with. The prevalency of this temporizing spirit, as it always will, where it obtains the ascendency, very greatly tied the hands of the few faithful and clear-sighted, who were disposed to meet the defection with the requisite firmness and decision, but found themselves almost borne down by the opposition, and by the "slack water," both of which combined to discourage prompt and honest labor with the delinquents, and the clearing of truth by bearing testimony against such as would not be reclaimed.

During this year, 1823, the meetings of Friends at New Bedford were additionally disturbed by the intrusion of two individuals from the State of New York, viz., Hull Barton and Phebe Johnson, who continued for some months to impose their ranting discourses upon Friends. Phebe Johnson came into the meeting attired with a large red shawl, etc., and took the ministers' seat. On one occasion, she and Benjamin Rodman undertook a sort of alternate preaching by sentences in the style of a dialogue, but addressed to the assembled company. At another time, Philip Dunum, one of their adherents, brought the Book of Discipline into the first-day morn-

ing meeting for worship, and insisted on reading aloud a portion of it.

Content Breed, who had been disowned the previous year, now took upon herself a course which seems to bespeak a mind rendered insane (or else altogether taken possession of by the evil one) through a constant indulgence in fanatical impulses and excitements, and the stifling of conviction. It appears from a long communication to the "Salem Gazette," dated twelfth month 10th, 1823, that she intruded into the meeting for worship in Salem, and disturbing the meeting with her disorderly harangue, was at length removed from the meeting-house. On the next first-day she attended the meeting at Lynn, a funeral taking place at that time, when the corpse was taken into the meeting. She was clad in thin white apparel, though the weather was cold. Pushing aside the persons who attempted to stop her, and ascending into the ministers' gallery, she soon rose, and exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God! Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" following this up with sundry very disorderly expressions. She then sat down, but soon after rose again, and in a ranting manner interrupted a female minister who was preaching. She was then removed from the house as quietly as practicable, but laid herself down on the door-step till carefully taken away, at the close of the meeting, to allow the coffin to be carried out. Being conveyed in a carriage to the house of one of her associates, she lay there from that day, the 23d, to the 30th of the eleventh month, appearing to be speechless and helpless, except that a few times she wrote short sentences. On the 29th, she pretended to prophesy her

own death the next day. The house became thronged, it is said, by hundreds of people, led thither by curiosity, and about the time she had fixed, she actually put on an appearance of dying, and lay as if dead for perhaps twenty-four hours, when, the crowd having dispersed, she "took a little wine," and soon disappeared from the town!

It should be added to this revolting account, that some time afterwards she again made her appearance in the community, and her mortified adherents endeavored to excuse her conduct on the plea of nervousness. She had probably excited her mind beyond the bounds of sanity by her wild fanaticism, and in this state may have really believed that she was about to die. If so, her error, grave as it was, seems a pitiable one, in this stage of her course, and less blamable than the conduct of those who were encouraging and abetting her hallucinations and vagaries. But the account furnishes an awful warning of the consequences of giving way to a spirit of ranterism.

These circumstances are said to have occurred at the house of John Alley, the man who had been acquitted by the court on the ground of insanity; and it is added, that Alley, after this, went to the meeting-house on the midweek meeting day, with an axe in his hand, to demolish the raised seats; but just as he was entering the house he was seized by some young men, who saw him coming, and disarmed. He was taken before two magistrates by a warrant; but his friends interceded so earnestly for him, that the Friends of the meeting were willing he should be released. After this he was seen running up and down the streets with a buffalo's skin

over him, and shouting like a madman. Yet in his outward concerns of business he appeared entirely rational.

It may be said that these are merely instances of the wild doings of crazy people, and therefore unworthy of a place in sober history. But there is a significance in them beyond that. They were the product of associated efforts, and one of the most sorrowful circumstances connected with them is, that they were approved and sustained by the disaffected class in the Society, who were acknowledged to be as sane as usual. It is also highly probable that their insanity (if insanity it was) was the ready *result* of the wild excitement into which they had been thrown by giving way to such fallacious imaginations, which the enemy of all good knew well how to take advantage of, to his own account and their loss.

Yet some likewise who were not generally deemed insane, acted at times in a manner indicating a great want of even natural feelings of decency and propriety; as we have seen also in later times in cases of more or less giving way to the spirit of ranterism. Benjamin Shaw, attending a funeral at Lynn, cried out, "The Lord hath taken this old man to Himself, and why all this fuss about it?" When the funeral procession was formed in the usual order, he exclaimed, that "if they had a fife and a drum, they would be ready for a march!" And after this, when he himself lost a young child by death, and a friend called to offer to render any assistance in doing what might be needful, he told him to "begone, for he wanted none of his help!" And the funeral of this child was conducted in such a manner as seemed to evince but little of natural affection or sense of the solemnity of the occasion. So true it is, that where the

heart is given up to unbelief, the kindly affections even of our nature often wither and decay.

Benjamin Rodman, with some of his associates, attended the ordination ceremonies of a Unitarian minister at New Bedford, and during the course of them broke forth by way of thanksgiving for the increase and spread of what he called gospel light in the world. He also attended, with some others of them, an "Oratorio," or assembly for what is profanely styled "sacred music;" uniting in the expressions of approbation given by the audience to certain portions of the performance. Then, at the Monthly Meeting of Friends in the twelfth month, the same man walked up to the head of the ministers' seat, with a volume of Isaac Penington's Writings in his hand (he had before done so with William Penn's Works), and, though tenderly desired to keep quiet, persisted in reading aloud several garbled passages (without the necessary context) respecting church government.

At the Monthly Meeting of New Bedford, in the second month, 1824, Isaac Stephenson, a minister from England, brother to Elizabeth Robson, and a man of an eminently meek and devout frame of spirit, was present; and having spoken in the way of encouragement to faithful Friends, Micah H. Ruggles attempted to do away the force of what he had said, and was afterwards very clamorous in the meeting for business, denying that the Society of Friends had any *creed*. But Isaac Stephenson replied to him, that if, by creed, was meant a confession of faith, he would refer him to one written by Robert Barclay, and also to his Apology; and likewise to one written by William Penn and George White-

head; adding that our early Friends were always ready to give a confession of their faith to those who asked it of them. Micah was also reminded that the sort of "liberty of conscience" demanded by him and his associates, was a liberty entirely different from the views of the Society at any time, and incompatible with the order and existence of religious society.

Isaac Stephenson tenderly sympathized with the honest-hearted members, under their peculiar trials. In the meeting the next first-day, amongst other remarks, he expressed his feelings relative to the state of things there, as follows (taken in short-hand by one not a Friend, and afterwards furnished to J. Otis): "The path of the true Christian is one of suffering and "tribulation; although human nature recoils at the "idea, and would gladly find out some easier way; "whilst the humble followers of a suffering Lord are "only desirous to be in company with their blessed and "adored Master and Redeemer, who does not fail to ful- "fil His own promises, or to verify that precious declar- "ation of His, 'If a man will serve me, let him follow "'me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be.' "Now, if we can sensibly feel that we are in company "with the blessed Lord and Master, surely this is enough, "whether it be in suffering or rejoicing. The servant "must not expect to be greater than his Lord. It is "enough for the Disciple to be as his Lord, and the "servant as his Master. We must not for a moment "entertain the idea, that we are, in the present life, to "be exempt from suffering. There are causes in our- "selves, and there are causes in others whom we know "and love, and there are also causes in the world at

"large, which cannot fail to be sources of suffering, of "conflict, and even of deep anguish of heart to those "who are above all things desirous of being what the "Lord would have them to be, and of sacrificing their "all, in order that they may feel something of peace and "acceptance with Him. These know what it is, like "the Apostles of our blessed Saviour, to bear about in "their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, that so the "life may be made manifest in their mortal flesh; though "often cast down, but not destroyed; though at seasons "in perplexity, but preserved from despair; for the "Lord's everlasting arm is underneath, and in propor- "tion as their tribulations abound for Christ's sake, and "for the promotion of His blessed cause in the earth, "their consolations will also abound by Him.

'To lay the soul that loves Him low,
Becomes the Only Wise;
To hide beneath a veil of woe
The children of the skies.'

"This is the way, dear friends, that He is pleased to "deal with the children of His people. Now, it was "foretold concerning our blessed Redeemer, by the evan- "gelical prophet Isaiah, that 'his face should be more "'marred than the face of any man—when we see Him, "'there is no beauty in Him that we should desire Him "'—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;' and I "fully believe that the true Christian's path is thus "marred; it is not beautiful to the eye of human wis- "dom; so that this eye must be closed, and the spiritual "eye opened by the Lord, before the saint can be really "beautiful in our eyes—before we can see 'the beauty of

"Holiness;' and walk in the path which the Lord has "cast up for His ransomed and redeemed to walk in.

"Every faithful follower of our suffering Lord, "wherever he is found, in whatever station or situation "in life, and to whatever peculiar denomination he may "belong, is entitled to that legacy which the Lord left "to all his followers without distinction: 'My peace I "'leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the "'world giveth give I unto you.' And, blessed forever "be His name, He doth not give it and then take it away, "without it is our own fault, and we are disobedient to "the divine law, and turn aside from following Him in "the strait and narrow way of the gospel." . . . .

"Now, it is possible, even if we should unwisely do "this, that we may patch up to ourselves *a peace;* but "it will not be a perfect one; for there will be seasons "when doubts and fears will spring up in our hearts, and "when the holy divine Witness, in spite of all we can do, "will testify against this. It will speak unto us even as "the Lord formerly spoke unto Adam, after he had tasted "the forbidden fruit: 'Adam, Adam, where art thou?' "And in this state, a sense of the loss which the soul "has sustained will from time to time be as it were forced "upon us; but then it is possible to turn away from this "state, and to close the eye which the Lord has thus "been pleased to open, and thus to become blind again "with regard to our real state and condition. And in "this way, it is to be feared, many high professors of the "Christian name do indeed quench the Holy Spirit in "their own souls, and will not hearken to His voice when "he pleads with them there, setting their sins in order "before them, giving them to see their polluted state,

"and that they are utterly unfit to enter the kingdom of "God.

"Well, I believe the Lord is, from season to season, "renewedly extending his divine power to the disobe- "dient and rebellious—unto those that hitherto have "refused to hearken to the divine voice—that have "chosen their own delusions, and have been sacrificing "to other gods, and not serving and worshipping the "Lord their God with all their hearts. . . . . My very "soul has been filled with fear, that there is such a thing "as spiritual idolatry—that of idolizing the gifts and "favors of the Lord—and this, for want of coming down "into the valley of deep humility, for want of having "the mind covered with the preserving fear of the Lord, "for want of feeling an inward trembling in order that "our souls may rest in the day of trouble. Now we are "exhorted to work out the salvation of the soul with "fear and trembling; for God worketh in us, both to "will and to do of His own good pleasure. And in pro- "portion as our minds are covered with the filial fear of "God (not with the slavish fear of man, bringing a snare "with it), but with that fear of the Lord which is as "a fountain of life, to preserve from the snares of death, "all that is in us will be gradually prostrated before the "Lord, and our wills subjected before Him, and thus we "shall distinctly feel the Lord to work in us, both to will "and to do of his own good pleasure. . . . . .

"May we be concerned to weigh ourselves, and try "ourselves, not in a false balance, or with a bag of "deceitful weights, but in the balance of the sanc- "tuary. . . . . And if we find we have erred, in a "greater or less degree, from the just man's path, let us

"be willing, under suffering, to submit to the revelation "of the righteous judgment of God, and that the rod "may be laid upon the backsliding nature in us, that so "we may be brought back again into the right way of "the Lord; for thus, in his loving kindness and mercy, "doth He deal with those that turn unto Him with full "purpose of heart."

There is an unction to be felt, even in reading this discourse, which must have reached the witness in the hearts of such of those who heard it delivered, as were not abandoned to their own ways, and hardened in their hearts against the reproofs of conviction.

Isaac Stephenson attended the ensuing Yearly Meeting in New England, in the summer of 1824, along with William Forster, also from England; and they are mentioned as being very helpful in their ministry, laboring for the encouragement of the rightly exercised for a due support of the discipline and of our various Christian testimonies. The watchmen, both ministers, elders, and overseers, in some places where the defection prevailed the most, had become somewhat cast down and ready to give out, by reason of the long-continued pressure of opposition; so that they needed to be afresh stirred up to faithfulness. Many of the leaders in the defection, it is true, had been by this time disowned; yet they continued to disturb the meetings for worship, and many of their more or less active partisans remained nominal members, and made constant opposition to the measures necessary for maintaining the good order of the Society, in the meetings for discipline, thereby often rendering them times of great discomfort to the well-concerned members.

William Forster also attended the Monthly Meeting at New Bedford in the sixth month, and spoke to the state of the meeting in a very clear and pointed manner, "showing," as Job Otis says, "on the one hand, the "delusive nature and tendency of the spirit of the world, "in all its various forms and appearances, warning all "against it, and particularly against the wisdom and "friendship of the world as well as against its follies "and vanities; and on the other hand, showing the "unity, the consistency, and the blessed effects of the Di- "vine Spirit in all its operations and teachings—that it "never led any to build again that which it once led "them to destroy." He spoke of the Apostle Paul, both before and after his conversion; in the first case as an example of man in the fall, governed by his own will and wisdom; and in the latter, of one acting under the power of the cross of Christ. He addressed some as being in a state of false peace, having their waters smoothed as with a covering of oil, that would be blown off when they should be troubled. Such were warned of the danger they were in, and exhorted and entreated to flee from the wrath to come. Christ's words to the Jews, after lamenting over them as about to have their house left unto them desolate, for having killed the prophets and stoned them who were sent unto them, were feelingly revived: "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"

One Priscilla Hunt, from the south, who afterwards figured conspicuously among the followers of Elias Hicks, and Benjamin Rodman before mentioned, seem to have been the prominent disturbers during 1824. The latter,

after producing much disturbance during a part of the sittings of the Yearly Meeting, was kept out of the house for the rest of the meeting, and was soon afterwards disowned. During the summer, Mary Newhall, with some of her companions, attempted to impose her unsound ministry on Friends at Lynn; and being ineffectually entreated to desist, she was, at a subsequent meeting, kept out of the house. She then stationed herself near the door outside, and beginning to speak, a rabble assembled around, and began to make some disturbance. Whereupon she, with two associates, was taken by a police officer before a magistrate, and by him reprimanded, and threatened with the penalty of the law against rioters, in case the offence should be repeated.

The Quarterly Meeting following was a time of trial to friends, through the usual disorderly conduct of some of the contentious party; but the meeting was sustained in patient endurance of their imposition, and afterwards enabled to proceed with its business, and friends were comfortably animated and encouraged to faithfulness, through the ministry of Abel Collins, and John Wilbur, of South Kingston, Rhode Island.

About the end of this year, and beginning of 1825, it became pretty evident that the bond of union among these disaffected and disorderly people was giving way. Dissensions among themselves became openly manifest. On one occasion, in one of their separate meetings, which they had set up, and held for awhile, the before-named Hull Barton while speaking, happening to make a pause, one B. Worrell began to sing, to prevent him from proceeding; and at another time, Mary Newhall finding H.

Barton not sufficiently heterodox to suit her views, attempted to controvert what he had said, and enforce her own deistical sentiments. This opposition so provoked Barton, that he openly attacked her, saying there was death in all she said, and calling her a worker of iniquity. Mary's husband hereupon came forward in great warmth, and designated what Barton had advanced as "a lie," and his conduct as "insufferable." The contention continued for some time, Hull's companion, among other sayings of a like nature, comparing Mary Newhall to a lamp that had become totally dark, and plastered all over with mud by her admirers. While this man was thus speaking unwelcome truths and pouring forth unsavory denunciations, another individual attempted to drown his voice by singing; and so they went on, in a disgraceful state of discord and disorder.

During the year 1825, these deluded people had in great measure desisted from further acts of disturbance in the meetings of Friends. Job Otis remarks about this time: "The disaffected party generally have with-
"drawn from us, and left our meetings, both for worship
"and discipline, quite undisturbed. Some of them occa-
"sionally attend the Unitarian Congregational meeting;
"while others entirely withdraw from public worship,
"under pretence of not feeling it a duty incumbent on
"them. But a *withering* evidently attends them all,
"and their reputation as religious characters is very
"much lost with all sober and reflecting people. Most
"of them, even to Mary Rotch and Mary Newhall,
"have thrown off all regard to plainness, and the
"younger part attend places of music and dancing.

"Much confusion, contradiction, and inconsistency ap-
"pears among them in their principles, professions,
"views, and reasonings; and but little else than vain
"speculations, abstract reasonings, impiety, and unbe-
"lief. Like the Babel builders of old, they seem con-
"founded, and their language unintelligible among
"themselves. Some are saying one thing, and some
"another, and all of them different things at different
"times. Their faith is evidently that of the world, and
"not that which overcomes the world. In their lives
"they are loose, and free from the restraints of the cross
"of Christ. The bonds of union among them seem
"slight, and evidently void of the cementing power of
"Truth."

This sorrowful defection from the Society in New England appears, as before remarked, to have been the forerunning outbreak, in America, of what was afterwards known as "Hicksism;" in like manner as we shall see that the "Beacon" separation in England was the first, premature, and abortive offshoot of what soon afterwards became known as "Gurneyism;" these designations not having been given to the respective parties from Hicks or Gurney having been actually the originators, but rather the ostensible developers and culminating agents, by their preaching, their writings, and their great personal influence, of the respective departures.

We now approach the period of the greatest and most awful schism which had hitherto been known in the Society—one which shook the whole body to its foundations, carried many away into unbelief of some of the most precious doctrines of the Christian religion, and

by the reaction of natural feeling which ensued in consequence of its dreadful errors, was one means of developing the subsequent and opposite heresy, of which our latter days are witnessing such sorrowful fruit. This schism was brought to light and mainly promoted by Elias Hicks and his coadjutors, and was confined in its career to the Society in America. It was in its nature the Rationalism of Germany and France without its scientific basis, and hardly covered by the thin veil of a pretended spirituality.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HICKSIAN, OR RATIONALISTIC SCHISM.

Elias Hicks was born at Hempstead, on Long Island, in the year 1748, and was from his birth a member of the Society of Friends. About a year after his marriage he settled at Jericho, on the same island, and continued to reside there until his decease. He came forth as a minister during the revolutionary war, and it is not known but that for some years his ministry was sound and edifying. He was largely engaged, and zealous in the work, often travelling abroad, and became much admired. He was esteemed as a good and kind neighbor, bore a good moral character, and appears to have often been useful in his vicinity in works of charitable good will, or in settling differences. Of the latter, it would seem, there was a plentiful supply among his neighbors.

There is a sound and instructive letter of his extant, addressed, in 1793, to Timothy Davis, who, with certain others, had gone into some separation from the Society. In this letter he tenderly expostulated with him, showing the great danger to which those subject themselves who run out into separation from the Lord's heritage, and besought him to retrace his steps, "whilst the arm of mercy and immaculate love is open." The individual addressed, it appears, was eventually favored to see and

condemn his error, and was restored into unity with the Society.*

It is probable, however, that the inward work of purification had stopped short of a going on to completion; that there had been a tincture of self-righteousness remaining unslain; and that this, fostered by the consciousness of being considered a great and eloquent preacher, gained strength as his years advanced, and furnished a door whereby the enemy entered and obtained sorrowful advantage, leading him into lofty imaginations and random speculations, at variance with the purity of the truth, and finally drifting him into a confused and incoherent form of infidelity; into which, through his popularity and influence as a bold, fluent, frequent, and extensive preacher, he became a chief instrument of leading off great numbers of the members of the Society in America from the sound Christian faith of our forefathers.

It has been said that, even very early in this century, some Friends had great anxiety excited in their minds in regard to his soundness of doctrine.

Daniel Haviland, a minister, of West Chester County, New York, who undoubtedly manifested on several occasions the gift of prophecy, foretold at Purchase Quarterly Meeting, in 1810, certain deep trials that were impending; saying, "You will be sifted from sieve to sieve. You will be driven out of your meeting-houses." And turning to those sitting in the gallery, he said, "And you that occupy those seats, must not expect to escape. You will share with the rest. You will be

* See "The Friend," Philadelphia, vol. ii, p. 208.

dragged from your seats." We do not hear that he mentioned any names on that occasion, but he lived to see the fulfilment in the outrageous conduct of the followers of Elias Hicks there at the time of the separation.*

About the year 1817 the grounds for such anxiety became more apparent. He displayed an unwholesome disposition to an assumption of high spiritual attainments, a pertinacity of purpose, and a degree of recklessness in his dogmatical assertions touching some important articles of Christian faith, which excited the fears of solid and spiritually discerning friends in various parts.

From some remarks in his "Journal," under date of the 6th of seventh month, 1817, I am led to apprehend that at least as early as that date (and probably earlier), he was not clear of unsound views in regard to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Though at that time acknowledging man's great need of a Saviour, he used expressions calculated to restrict our faith *merely* to a Saviour "in the very centre of his [man's] own soul;" saying that it "is a fatal mistake" to look for a Saviour "*anywhere else*"—that the Saviour needed "*cannot be one without Him,*" etc. Although not very ex-

* See "The Friend," vol. ii, p. 134.

In the Yearly Meeting of New York, in 1828, after the separation had taken place, Daniel Haviland declared, that, more than thirty years before that date, when the Yearly Meeting was held at Westbury, two women Friends from Europe, travelling in this country in the ministry (believed to be Mary Ridgeway and Jane Watson), sitting in a room in a Friend's house where he lodged, one of them, seeing him go by the room-door, called him in, and pointing to Elias Hicks, who was in another room, said to Daniel Haviland, "That man will some day be a troubler in Israel." See "Journal of T. Shillitoe," vol. ii, p. 313.

plicit, yet this mode of expression would hardly have been adopted, if he had not begun to discard a reliance on the Lord Jesus in His outward appearance in Judea, in His sufferings and death for us, as being in any sense our Saviour. One sound in the faith of Christ cannot *separate* Christ *without* (in that prepared body) from Christ *within* (in his gracious operations in the soul of man). The same *exclusiveness* in regard to the outward manifestation, is to be found also in his remarks* dated 8th of third month, 1818; where in speaking of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," he restricts it to what took place at the fall of Adam and Eve in their own hearts, slaying the Lamb *there* by their disobedience; and says that this expression, as well as the terms "Emanuel, Jesus, sent of God, great Prophet, Christ our Lord," etc., mean "*nothing* less *nor more*, than the Spirit and power of God in the soul of man;" thus ignoring all that blessed manifestation of Christ in the flesh, wherein He walked in holiness and divine goodness among men, and "gave His life" on the cross, "a ransom for many."

Such sentiments rapidly accumulated in his mind. In 1818, he wrote a letter to Phebe Willis, in which, among various other evidences of unsound views, he said that the Scriptures appear "to have been the cause of fourfold more harm than good to Christendom, since the apostles' days;" and compared Bible Societies to the building of the tower of Babel. And towards the conclusion, he said, "I well remember how oft my conscience has smote me, when I have been endeavoring to support

* See E. Hicks's "Journal," pp. 304 and 329.

the Society's belief of the Scriptures, that they so very far excelled all other writings." This letter, and one to the same Friend in 1820 of a similar tenor, and denying the atoning efficacy of Christ's death, would have spread alarm over the whole length and breadth of the Society, if their contents had been then made known.

After this, his unsoundness became more and more plainly developed. Yet his great fluency of speech, the novelty of many of his ideas (crude, and coarse, and really founded in ignorance, as many of them were), and the boldness with which he enunciated them—fearing no contradiction, and caring for no consequences—powerfully attracted the admiration of ill-balanced minds, especially among the youth; a large proportion of whom had been suffered to grow up with but little mental cultivation, discipline, or restraint, and still less of an unremitting parental concern for their nurture and admonition in the Lord. Multitudes of these, and, sorrowful to say, many also of more mature years, flocked around him with adulation, as a man of uncommon attainments in religion. By rapid degrees he became more explicit in his avowal of doctrines at variance with the Christian faith as always held by the Society; and in every step of his progress towards infidelity, his admirers more or less advanced with him, until, in neighborhoods where his influence was chiefly felt, the Society became almost overwhelmed by the pressure of those who did not scruple to advocate deistical sentiments. But at the same time that he feared no contradiction, being so confident in his own position, yet he knew well how to modify his speech according to the various classes to whom he addressed himself in different places. So that some of his

unsound views were expressed in public with so much plausibility, and so covered with other expressions familiar to Friends, that many honest-hearted persons of no very deep experience, who had perhaps only occasional and limited opportunities of hearing him for themselves, and who were more or less caught by his sanctimonious appearance, and profession of being a great reformer, did not perceive the insidious poison which lurked beneath expressions at times designed to cover up the glaring unsoundness of his sentiments.

In the year 1821, in a letter to Thomas Willis, of Jericho, L. I., which was some years afterwards printed, he declared that a belief in the miraculous birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, as we have it plainly stated in Scripture, was a "historical and traditional belief," that "according to his best judgment" there was "considerable more Scripture evidence for his being the son of Joseph than otherwise," and that he conceived "this miraculous birth was *intended* principally to *induce* the Israelites *to believe* he was their promised Messiah"—in other words (plain English), that it was what is called *a pious fraud*, got up to promote a certain belief among the populace! For one who professed to be a minister of Christ, to come forth with such sentiments, was indeed astonishing, and if this had been at that time publicly known, the Society might have been better prepared to look for and meet such a succession of wild and frightful doctrines as soon followed each other in his public declarations. It would be a dismal task to follow him during the next six years, and trace the particular order of development of these sentiments from time to time. He seemed to be floating on the wave of popular ap-

plause among his adherents, and was perhaps thereby carried at times beyond what his sober judgment under other circumstances might have dictated. And this may account for his frequent contradictions. But as many (perhaps most) of his sermons during this period were taken down in short hand, and printed and widely circulated by his friends, and the correctness of the printed copies not only was never disavowed, but, at least as regards a large proportion, was distinctly acknowledged by him to be "*in general very correct;*"* there can be no reasonable ground for doubt as to the sentiments being his own, as expressed; and especially as some, the most distinctly subversive of the Christian faith, were in various modes of speech repeated many times over, and several of the very worst of them he undertook to defend in private interviews with those who from time to time sought his conviction and return to the truth of the gospel.

It will be best now to allude to the various items of his unbelief, as gathered from his *printed Sermons* and *Letters*, and to class them under distinct heads of doctrine, in order to have a clearer view of their concatenation and general tendency, than by merely following the dates of his successive utterances in various places. His habit of speaking (judging from the generality of his printed discourses) seems to have been desultory, random, irreverent, and sometimes even profane in its terms; and though often contradictory to what was expressed at

* See his Letter to the Stenographer, M. T. C. Gould, dated third month 28th, 1828: "I have read most of the discourses which thou hast published, and have found them in general very correct." The Quaker, vol. iv, p. vii.

other times and places, and at times containing passages unobjectionable as to doctrine, his sermons were as a whole, so full of unsound sentiments, and of allusions tending to promote his favorite unsound dogmas, that it is difficult to know what passages to select from among the mass of error, without making the exhibit altogether too bulky, and we may say, too nauseous for Christian readers to peruse with calmness. How they could have been calmly listened to in Friends' meetings, seems a mystery.

Respecting OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, we may take the following out of many passages of similar tendency.

In a sermon preached at Fallsington, in Pennsylvania, on the 11th of twelfth month, 1824, after speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of man, he says: "Here now we learn as rational beings, by his own tes- "timony, what it is that makes a son of God. We see "that this flesh and blood *never could have been*, in a "strict sense, *the Son of God*, but a *creature*, created by "God, by his power: because spirit and matter *cannot* "*be united* together and make a being, nor make a son "of God." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 251.)

Again, in a sermon preached at Arch Street Meeting, in Philadelphia, on the 14th of eleventh month, 1824, he said: "Who was his Father? He was begotten of "God. We *cannot suppose that it was the outward body* "of flesh and blood, that was begotten of God, but a "birth of the spiritual life in the soul. We must apply "it internally and spiritually. For nothing can be a "son of God, but that which is spirit; and nothing but "the soul of man is a recipient for the light and Spirit "of God. Therefore, nothing can be a son of God, but

"that which is immortal and *invisible. Nothing visible* "*can be a son of God.*" . . . . "By the analogy of *reason,* "Spirit cannot beget a material body, because the thing "begotten must be of the same nature with its father. "Spirit cannot beget anything but spirit; it cannot "beget flesh and blood. No, my friends, it is impossi- "ble." (*Philadelphia Sermons,* p. 10.)

Again, in his sermon at Fallsington, on the 11th of twelfth month, 1824, he said, in reference to Christ, "Then it was not *his* grace, but the grace of God *com-* "*municated* to *him as it was communicated to the rest* of "*Abraham's children,* to every one in a sufficient degree "to enable them to come up to the law and command- "ments given them." (*Philadelphia Sermons,* p. 253.)

Preaching at Staunton, Delaware, eleventh month 20th, 1826, he said, "Jesus Christ the Saviour of the "soul, *never was seen* by the eyes of men, and forever "will be the same power of God, and same divine "anointing with which Jesus was anointed." (*The* "*Quaker,* vol. iv, p. 84.)

Preaching at another time, he said, in regard to the Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism by John, "Here now we find, that having an *additional power,* he "had also additional trials to encounter; he was brought "to see the trials and temptations that awaited him, *aris-* "*ing from the propensities of his human nature;* for he "stood in need of all things in the same manner as we "do, to eat, to drink, and to *seek* knowledge." (*New York Sermons,* p. 85.)

Again, in the Fallsington sermon, already quoted from, he said:

"Now, let us pause a little, and consider what is here

"meant. Can it be supposed that he was driven into "an outward wilderness? Or shall we not suppose that "he was brought, by the power of divine light, to see "*the wilderness state of his own mind?*" (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 256.)

In Philadelphia, on the 1st of twelfth month, 1824, at the Western Meeting-house, after speaking of Jesus as "*their* Saviour," meaning the Jews, he said:

"He it was that saved them from their *outward* sick-"nesses. He was *only* an *outward* Saviour, that healed "their *outward* diseases, and gave them *strength of body* "to enjoy that outward good land. This was a figure "of the great Comforter, which he would pray the "Father to send them; an inward one, that would heal "all the diseases of their *souls*, and cleanse them from "all their *inward* pollutions; that *thing* of God, that "*thing* of eternal life. It was the *soul* that wanted "salvation; but this *no outward Saviour could do*, no "external Saviour could *have any hand* in it." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 50.)

Preaching at Trenton, on the 12th of twelfth month, 1824, he declared:

"*Not the name of Jesus Christ* will save us. No, but "that light and life that was in Him—that was in the "beginning with God, by which the worlds were made, "and that light, it is declared, enlighteneth every man "that cometh into the world. Therefore, *every one of us* "has *the same light and life*, according to his necessity, "*as Jesus Christ had, in his proportion.*" (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 295.)

In a printed Reply to a Letter of Thomas French, detailing his unsound preaching at Purchase Quarterly

Meeting, in 1828, Elias Hicks says, in reply to one of the charges: "My declaration was this, that 'Jesus "'Christ, while in that outward manifestation, walking "'up and down in Jewry, in the course of his outward "'ministry, *never made a Christian.*'" And a few sentences afterwards he acknowledges: "I also said, there "was *no external mediator* between God and his creature "man under the gospel."

In the New York Sermons we are told that he said: "But it is not the righteousness of another that can save "us. It *must be done by the individual himself*, or he "cannot be the elect of the Lord; for he is of the elect "who elects God. Jesus *elected his heavenly Father* as "his rule and guide. So also *must we*," etc. (*New York Sermons*, p. 16.)

In his sermon at Fallsington, again, on the 11th of twelfth month, 1824, he said as follows:

"Oh may we press forward to the mark for the prize "of the high calling" (omitting "in Christ Jesus our "Lord"). "It is attainable to us; *as certainly* as it was "*attainable* by Jesus Christ, so certainly it is attainable "by every one of his faithful followers." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 266.)

At another time and place, he said: "This portion of "his Spirit being given to us to profit with, it will con- "tinue to operate till it leavens the whole lump. *Herein* "*it was*, that *Jesus became the Son of God*, through the "life and power of God in him, which leavened him "into His own holy nature, till he was *swallowed up* "into the *divinity* of his heavenly Father. Having been "faithful to the Father in all things, His storehouse was "opened to him, *because* his Father *could trust* him with

"all His treasures. He knew that he *would not em-*
"*bezzle*, or make a wrong use of these treasures; but that
"he would wait to know his Father's will, before he
"would dispose of the things which were *opened to his*
"*view*. Now, *here is the full and complete divinity of*
"*Jesus Christ*. From what Jesus himself said, *he was*
"*not God!*" (*New York Sermons*, p. 96.)

At Trenton, on the 12th of twelfth month, 1824, in speaking of "Moses and the prophets, Jesus Christ and His apostles" he added immediately: "He never can "set *any of these* above us, because if he did, he would "be partial." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 292.)

Preaching at Wilmington, Del., on the 3d of twelfth month, 1826, he made use of the following unjustifiable insinuation against the correctness of our translation of the New Testament, in pursuance of his constant practice of *separating* Christ within us from our Lord Jesus Christ who appeared in the prepared body. He said: "Now don't let your attention be turned *outward*, from "the expression of these words ['that Jesus Christ is in "you, except ye be reprobates'], for *very probably the* "*translators have not given it right to us*. Because the outward Christ never could be, or can be, in us." (*The Quaker*, vol. i, p. 222.)

How can we possibly doubt, in reading the above extracts (which might be indefinitely multiplied), that his purpose was a persistent one, to degrade our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, to the level of a mere man, like any one of ourselves who might *attain* to perfect righteousness?

In like manner, respecting the ATONEMENT, or Propitiatory Sacrifice on the Cross, he thus expressed himself to Dr. N. Shoemaker, of Philadelphia, in a letter, dated third month 31st, 1823, and afterwards printed:

"Did God send Him into the world purposely to suf-
"fer death by the hands of wicked men? By no means;
"but to live a righteous and godly life," etc.

If this be true, what becomes of the saying of the apostle Peter? "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;" or of his own gracious declaration: "Even as the Son of man *came*, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give his life a ransom for many*."

Again, in the same letter: "But I do not consider that
"the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood
"of Jesus on the cross was an atonement for any sins
"but the *legal sins* of the *Jews;* for as their law was out-
"ward, so their legal sins and their penalties were out-
"ward, and these could be atoned for by an outward
"sacrifice," etc.

And again, in the same letter, how awful the following expressions! "Surely, is it possible, that any
"rational being that has any right sense of justice or
"mercy, that would be willing to accept forgiveness of
"his sins on such terms?" . . . . "Nay, was he so
"hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved
"through such a medium, would it not prove that he
"stood in direct opposition to every principle of justice
"and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to
"be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice?"

At a meeting in Rose Street, New York, fifth month 25th, 1828, he thus expressed himself:

"What life is it that is an atonement for the sins of
"mankind? That very life and being that has commit-
"ted sin, and opposed God." (*The Quaker*, vol. 3, p. 192.)

Respecting THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, in a sermon preached at Abington, Pa., twelfth month 6th, 1824, he thus expressed himself:

"One would suppose that to a rational mind, the hear-
"ing and reading of the instructive *parables of Jesus*
"would have a *tendency* to reform and turn men about
"to truth, and lead them on in it. *But they have no*
"*such effect.*" (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 129.)

Again, he said, in the same sermon:

"They have been so bound up *in the letter*, that they
"think they must attend to it, to the exclusion of every-
"thing else. Here is an abominable idol worship, of a
"thing without any life at all, a *dead monument.*" (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 139.)

And again, in the sermon at Trenton, twelfth month 12th, 1824:

"But here we see that the people have been depend-
"ing upon *the letter*. Oh, what mischief has this done in
"Christendom! What dreadful work has it made among
"the children of men! It proves, itself, what it is;
"*that it is nothing but a history of passing events*, which
"occurred eighteen hundred years ago, a great *portion of*
"*which may be true;* a great deal was the immediate
"experience of the servants of the Lord, and opened to
"them by his revealing Spirit, which they have written.
"But look back at Christendom at its rise. Here we
"*see Jesus calling them to an account for attending to the*
"*Scriptures;* and we see in a short time after, that by
"application *to these books* contention entered, and
"divided Christian professors." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 315.)

The expression in this passage, of "1800 years ago,"

refers of course to the New Testament history; of which he says, "a great *portion may be true!*" As to our Lord "*calling them to account* for attending to the Scriptures," it is utterly false. He frequently referred to and quoted them himself.

In a meeting at Darby, in Pennsylvania, on the 7th of twelfth month, 1826, he said, after alluding to certain "non-essentials," held by religious professors, "And these "are all *stumbling-blocks*, and perhaps there is not a "greater one than the Scriptures, called the Bible, or the "Old and New Testaments bound up in a book." (*The Quaker*, vol. iv, p. 138.)

Respecting what he called RELIGION, we have in the following passage from a sermon preached at the Western meeting-house, in Philadelphia, on the 1st of twelfth month, 1824, a remarkable definition, which sounds more like the effusion of a heathen philosopher than of a minister of Christ. Though long, it will be best to present the whole passage, to show its deliberate aim. He said:

"All that we have to do, is to keep every desire regu-"lated by the standard of truth; and as we keep up this "engagement, we are improving the moments as they "pass. Here our improvement is all *entered for us upon* "*the Credit side;* we are made *creditors* for our right "improvement. So, on the contrary, if we neglect the "proper improvement, it is placed to the *Debtor side.* "It is a common maxim, and a good one, that short "reckonings make long friends. If it was only our care "every day of our lives, to look over the actions of the "day, and see how *our accounts* stand with our Creator, "how greatly should we be benefited by this self-

"examination. Would not a *prudent bookkeeper*, if he "did right, bring up his *debt* and *credit* every night, "that he might know how things stood? Then how "much more so, in the *business of salvation*, ought we "to endeavor to improve every moment of the passing "time from day to day, and never let an evening pass "over, without looking over and turning over the leaf, to "see *where the balance* would *strike*, whether *in favor* or "*against*. If it be *against* us, let us double our diligence "the succeeding day, to retrieve our lost time. Let us "strive to have *a balance in our favor* from season to "season, and from day to day. If this were our con-"cern, although we were not joined in society with any "profession of religion, were these our engagements, *all* "*would be well;* all these would become one, and make "that society, which is the only militant church on "earth. However scattered, they would feel for one an-"other; and whenever they passed by one another, they "would be impressed by the one Spirit to become one "body, and made to drink into the one Spirit. *This I* "*call religion;* but I consider no profession of religion "to be religion at all." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 44.)

So by this we may go on sinning, even without repenting, only we must take care, as "prudent bookkeepers," to make it all up every day by a counterbalance of good deeds, to keep our *credit* right with the Almighty! There is then no need of repentance or of forsaking sin, if we can only manage to *balance the account* every night by something to *our credit*, and so keep the Most High always *in our debt!* And this is what Elias Hicks calls *religion*. "*This I call religion*," says he, with great apparent satisfaction. Verily, it is

the refuge, forlorn as it is, to which they are driven, who reject the propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Preaching at Cherry Street meeting, Philadelphia, fourth month 13th, 1828, he said: "Now I do not "consider *faith* and *belief*, merely, to be any part of "religion; because belief is not a voluntary act of the human mind." (*The Quaker*, vol. iii, p. 94.)

Respecting HEAVEN and HELL, he held as follows:

In a letter from a Friend, of Ohio, alluded to above, he had been charged with having said, among many other unsound declarations, at Purchase Quarterly Meeting on the 1st of fifth month, 1828: "All the heaven and hell "there was, was in us,—we received our rewards and "punishments every day; our heaven and hell daily, "and all, he believed, we ever should. To prove it, he "said, the drunkard would get his bottle and get drunk; "this was his heaven; we saw him happy, he was then "in heaven; and then he would, when he got sober, feel "miserable; this was his hell; and if there was any "heaven or hell hereafter, it was something we could "know nothing about."

In his printed Reply, defending himself from some of the charges in that letter, he does not deny having expressed himself as above, but, in degree at least, admits it, by the following retort upon his accuser:

"And as to what he says about heaven or hell, I "will ask him where he has found any heaven or hell "without him? I should like to hear him describe the "shape and form of them, and in what region or place "they are situated?"

And in a sermon given in the New York edition, he

declared that "heaven is *everywhere* where God and his "*rational creatures* are. It is not a local place by any "means." (*New York Sermons*, p. 93.)

He seems to have forgotten that our gracious Lord said, "I go to prepare *a place* for you."

Respecting THE DEVIL, and fallen angels, his belief was expressed as follows:

In a sermon preached at Byberry, Pa., on the 8th of twelfth month, 1824, he said:

"But people are too generally looking outwardly to "find God, and in this outward looking they are told "about *a devil*—some monstrous creature—some self-"existing creature—that is terrible in power. Now all "this seeking to know God, and *this devil*, or the serpent "without, is the work of darkness, superstition, and tra-"dition. It hath *no foundation;* it is *all breath* and "*wind* without the power." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 163.)

Again, in the same sermon, he said:

"What is the devil? It is that *cunning, twining* "*wisdom*—that serpentine wisdom of *man*. . . . . It is "nothing but excess that makes the drunkard. Here "now we see *where sin begins;* here we see *where devils* "*are created*—by *man himself; he is the author of them* "*all*, as *he* is the *only fallen angel* upon earth." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 166.)

In like manner, at Trenton, on the 12th of twelfth month, 1824, he said:

"Who are the devils? Apostate men and women "who go contrary to God. *They are all devils. Every-*"*thing* that is in opposition to the will of God is a "devil." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 293.)

Of the same tenor is what he said at the Northern District Meeting-house, in Philadelphia, on the 16th of eleventh month, 1824, as follows:

"We may remember what the apostle declared, that "*Satan*, the *name* given to that tempting *disposition in* "*us*, which is the man of sin, *self* and *self-will* in man; "there is *no other man of sin* that I ever knew or "found." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 37.)

Had he forgotten, while making these bold assertions, the distinct account in the New Testament, that even the blessed Jesus was tempted by the devil? If we say that this was "the serpentine wisdom of man," his own "self-will," the "tempting disposition," in him, do we not speak blasphemy? For we know that the dear Son of God was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;" that he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." So that, if there is no devil but our own evil propensities, the evangelist must have recorded a dreadful falsehood, or else blasphemed his Lord and Master!

Respecting the Scripture account of THE GARDEN OF EDEN:

On the 5th of twelfth month, 1824, at a meeting at Germantown, he said:

"What is Eden's Garden, my friends? It is the "place where the Lord God is pleased to commune with "his creatures face to face, and *nowhere else*. It is every-"where where God is." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 113.)

In a sermon preached at Horsham, Pa., on the 16th of twelfth month, 1826, he said:

"And what was that? It was a state of communion "with the Holy One. It was *no located spot*, my friends:

"the Garden of Eden, so called, was never located on "earth." (*The Quaker*, vol. iv, p. 27.)

And at Middletown, on the 19th of twelfth month, 1826, he said:

"I say there never was any such tree, nor any such "garden, outwardly, as is here represented, but it is a "figure or allegory." (*The Quaker*, vol. iv, p. 203.)

And at Byberry, on the 8th of twelfth month, 1824, he said:

"And what were the *trees* in the Garden of Eden? "They were *the propensities of man* in his *animal body*. "These are the trees that will grow if they are not kept "down by pruning." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 167.)

In a sermon included in the New York edition, he spoke of—

"The same covenant of light and life which he made "with our first parents when placed in the paradise of "God; *which* was *no particular local spot*, but *a state* and "*condition* of the *soul*, which was suitable to have com- "munion with its Maker." (*New York Sermons*, p. 88.)

And (marvellous confusion!) in preaching at Trenton, on the 12th of twelfth month, 1824, he declared:

"For *God must be the tree of the knowledge of good* "*and evil.* There was no tree of the knowledge of good "and evil but God himself." (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 317.)

Respecting the FALL OF MAN, we may gather his views from the following assertion made in a sermon preached at the Falls, in Bucks County, Pa., twelfth month 20th, 1826:

"I certainly know that I have never felt any loss "from Adam's sin. I have never felt anything to induce

"me to commit sin, but a desire in myself to gratify my "propensities beyond the design of heaven in giving "those propensities to me." (*The Quaker*, vol. ii, p. 266.)

Respecting REASON, and its supremacy, so much vaunted by the French revolutionary school of philosophers falsely so called, he said, at a meeting at Newtown, Pa., on the 9th of twelfth month, 1824:

"I say, if Antichrist brings anything up which has a "counterfeit appearance, *our reason* is a *balancing prin-*"*ciple.*" (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 207.)

In a printed Letter to Dr. Edwin A. Atlee, of Philadelphia, defending himself against some charges of having expressed unsound views in an interview which Anna Braithwaite had with him at his house in 1824 (whose statement of what occurred is much confirmed as to its main features by his own letter defending himself against it), he makes the following deliberate assertion; a dogma which was caught up by his followers and echoed throughout the land as if it were a fundamental truth:

"I admit that I did assert, and *have long done it*, that "we *cannot believe* what we *do not understand.*"

And yet, in preaching at the Western meeting-house, Philadelphia, on the 1st of twelfth month, 1824, he could so far forget his adulation of Reason, as to utter the following indiscriminate fulmination against those who are making the most constant efforts to improve and promote it by knowledge: "Oh, that *men of science* might "be aware, what a *curse* they are to the inhabitants of "the earth! *what a great curse!*" (*Philadelphia Sermons*, p. 53.)

The foregoing exhibit of only a few of his own authenticated words places it beyond any reasonable doubt,

that Elias Hicks did clearly and unequivocally deny *the miraculous birth, divine Sonship*, and *Mediatorship* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and his *atoning sacrifice* on the cross, and, often in terms almost contemptuous, endeavored to show Him forth as a mere man; that he spoke of the Holy Scriptures in the same tone of contempt, as "nothing but a history of passing events which occurred "1800 years ago, a great *portion* of which *may be true;*" and asserted that they were one of the greatest stumbling-blocks to mankind; that he denied *Heaven* or *Hell* to have any place or being, except in the soul of man; or *the devil* to be anything more than our *evil propensities;* that the *Garden of Eden* was any particular place, but a "*condition of the soul;*" and asserted, among many other fearful errors, that *Reason* is the "*balancing principle,*" to detect "counterfeit" presentations to the mind; so that we are not to be expected "to believe what we do not understand!" These views are in entire accordance with German rationalism.

Here the inquiry suggests itself, whether Elias Hicks really knew what he was saying in these wild and deistical enunciations; whether he really appreciated the scope of his expressions; whether the sentiments as uttered were truly held by him, or whether the utterances were the offspring of a momentary excitement while speaking. I should be inclined charitably to believe the latter, if possible, especially after comparing his sermons with the comparatively sober remarks in his printed Journal; though we have no means of judging how far the latter was published, complete and full as he left it. But such a supposition seems forbidden by the fact, that some of his worst sentiments are found confirmed by

port him in his wild idea. As before, this also "he dressed with the beauty and happiness of good moral conduct." After this, he "made a full stop"—and then declared, "We *have a right* to choose good or choose evil, just as we please; and take *that right* from me, and I would not value my being worth having."

He continued his discourse for nearly half an hour longer, laboring to support his views, and then soon closed the meeting. Joseph Hoag was greatly tried with what he had heard, and concluded that if possible he must have a private interview with him. This was obtained after some difficulty in a few days. After some discourse on J. Hoag's dissatisfaction with his preaching, and in particular with his absurd declarations regarding the tree of knowledge of good and evil being "the only evil in space," thus making the Almighty, who, he had himself said, planted the tree, the author of all evil, Elias said, "What other evil is there then?"

J. Hoag. "The Bible tells of a serpent."

Elias. "What! a *Snake?*"

J. Hoag now endeavored to convince him, by appealing to his own experience, of the existence of an evil spirit, tempting mankind to wrong. His words came at length with so much cogency against the flimsy defences of Elias, that he acknowledged, "I do not mean to discard the idea that there is an evil spirit which tempts us."

J. Hoag. "What dost thou then mean to deny? Thou certainly denied it in thy preaching."

Elias. "I mean to deny that there is a great mawking devil, with one oxfoot and one manfoot, and five eyes, which appears to people to scare them!"

J. Hoag. "I am disappointed in Elias Hicks. I always thought him to be a man of talents. I did not expect to hear such words come out of his mouth. I have no belief that there is a child in our country, twelve years old, that has learned enough to read, that believes such an idea. Matter does not inhabit the world of spirits."

Elias. "Many of our Quaker ministers believe it."

J. Hoag here requested him to stop, and referring him to the Bible, endeavored to show him how defective his ideas were, and how contrary his language was to the plain Scripture account. He made no further reply to this, and Joseph Hoag reasoned plainly with him on the broad ground of the unsoundness of his ministry; telling him what uneasiness had to his knowledge been already produced by it in various parts of the country, and how he had been told by Friends, that Elias "would never make Quakers by his preaching, *but would make infidels.*"

After Joseph had declared his entire disunity with such preaching and sentiments, and Elias having nothing further to answer, they parted. Joseph Hoag adds to his account of the interview, that after this, "he staid hereaway some time, held meetings, and made social visits, until he had enlisted every Elder in our Monthly Meeting, and several influential members, and went off and left me in as hot a furnace as he could prepare for me."

In the summer of 1822, Joseph Whitall, a minister of Woodbury, N. J., attended New York Yearly Meeting, and heard Elias Hicks declare, "that the same power

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that made Christ a Christian, must make us Christians, and the same power that saved Him must save us."

Having never before heard such sentiments from any minister among Friends, and being very much astonished at them, Joseph felt it to be his religious duty to take a private opportunity with him on the subject. In this interview, J. Whitall tenderly entreated him, as one for whom he had entertained a warm esteem, and acknowledged that he would willingly, yes, gladly, "spend a year in travail and exercise, that his sun might go down in brightness." E. Hicks was brought to some feeling, and even to tears; but he still maintained his belief that "Christ was no more than a man," and "liable to fall like other men;" and further asserted, that "it was an abomination to pray to Jesus Christ"—that "the Scriptures were the cause of more bloodshed and confusion than any other thing"—that "it was a pity the Epistles had ever been handed down to us," etc. And when expostulated with upon the schism which such ideas, if persisted in, must produce, he said, "It was in vain to reason with him on the subject, for his mind was made up—that he was determined to persevere, let the consequences be what they might." And in another interview with J. Whitall, six months afterwards, at Woodbury, he still took similar ground, stating his belief that "Jesus Christ was no more than an Israelite," and that "he believed George Fox, William Penn, and R. Barclay thought as he did, but they were *afraid to come out!*"*

* See J. Whitall's Testimony, in Foster's Report, vol. i, pp. 214, 215, and 246.

Our ancient and venerable friend, William Jackson, a minister, of London Grove, in Pennsylvania, was another of those who sought Elias Hicks's recovery by a private interview. William Jackson had known something of Elias Hicks for about forty-three years, without being aware of his unsoundness; when, being in New York, in the summer of 1824 (then about seventy-eight years of age), and being at a meeting where Elias Hicks preached, he heard such sentiments from him in his public discourse, as he had never before heard delivered, "either by professor or profane."* He spoke of the Lord Jesus as "having suffered *as a martyr*"—as "many others since that time had done"—and labored to bring him down to the level of a mere man. William Jackson being greatly astonished and grieved, believed it to be his duty, "as a brother," to seek an interview with him, in order, if possible, to convince him of his erroneous and dangerous views. In his account of what occurred, he states that Elias Hicks asserted to him, that "there was as much scripture testimony to prove that he [Jesus] was no more than the son of Joseph and Mary, as there was to prove the contrary." William Jackson brought forward the testimony of Matthew and Luke; but Elias Hicks said that "they were no more than fables." William Jackson expressed his astonishment at hearing such language, but Elias declared that "he was confident of what he said—that it was a thing impossible—spirit could only beget spirit—it could not beget material matter." To William Jackson's objections he retorted that he believed God was a spirit, and repeated several times over, that "Spirit can only beget spirit," "that he

* See his Testimony given in Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 100.

was as confident of it, as that he was standing there." William Jackson further reasoned with him then, as to the creation of the world by Him who is a spirit. His answer was, "What of the creation?" And when William informed him that he alluded to the account we have in the Bible, he replied, "Why, that's only Moses's account;" and on William Jackson asking, "Whether it was not a sufficient account for us to believe," his answer was, "It is *but an allegory.*" William Jackson left him with a heavy heart.

But where were the anointed Elders, where were the overseers of the flock, in the different places where, during this long succession of years, Elias Hicks was occasionally travelling among them, or even once only, and preaching as he did? How can we reconcile it with duty—how can we believe it possible—for deeply experienced servants of Christ—watchmen on the walls—to sit and hear His holy name reviled by such blasphemous declarations, and yet keep silence, and thus let the people, young and old, drink it all in, under the pretence of gospel ministry, and suffer such a preacher to go away to other places unrebuked? One would have supposed that some, at least, would have been constrained to cry out, in very grief and shame, "Oh! no, friends, this is not our doctrine, neither has the Society ever held such abominable sentiments—be not deceived—God is not to be mocked!"

How came it to pass, that with perhaps two or three solitary exceptions, in Philadelphia, in Baltimore, and on Long Island, during the latter part of his career,*

* By Gideon Seaman, an elder, and Solomon Underhill, a minister. See Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 161.

it does not appear that this was done; unless we consider this to have been done when a minister was led, as sometimes occurred, to preach sound doctrine as an antidote to his unsound? Why was he not arrested in his course, or at least publicly rebuked and checked, and the evil thus averted?*

There were several causes for it. First. The Society in general had been lulled into a state of ease and apathy, and nothing had occurred of recent years to bring prominently into view the necessity of "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," by strictly maintaining the purity and soundness of our doctrines; so that many were almost forgetting the lines of distinction between truth and error. Second. If at any time uneasiness was aroused in individual minds, they saw that popular feeling was greatly excited in his favor, and that any open opposition to his dogmas would at once stir up a commotion, the extent and result of which could not be foreseen. Third. His erroneous sentiments were generally so mixed up with familiar truths, or, as Joseph Hoag said, so "polished and dressed with recommendations of the beauty of morality," that the covering was weakly allowed to counterbalance the filth; and, tender for themselves and for the delinquent preacher, rather than valiant for the unchangeable truth of the gospel, they put by the seemingly dangerous duty, and

* On the occasion alluded to in Baltimore, during the Yearly Meeting, his doctrine was publicly denounced by Dr. Dicks, of Alexandria, who had himself, in early life, been an avowed deist, but having been favored to experience a change of heart, had become a religious man and a member among Friends, and eventually an approved minister.

satisfied themselves with secret lamentations, or with the conclusion that "the servant of the Lord must not strive;" thus making their sweeping construction of the apostle's injunction wide enough to cover their own dereliction of one of their weightiest duties as watchmen over the flock.

The evil seeds sown so widely over the country were not scattered in vain, but produced an abundant crop of unsettlement and unbelief, of discord and bitter contention. Sound Friends in various places at length became aroused to a sense of the danger which threatened to sweep the Society from its ancient foundation, and strand it on hopeless shoals. Looking around them, they perceived a formidable array of persons enlisted already for the promotion of the ascendency of the various new notions in the Society. This array was composed in the first place, of open and avowed advocates of Elias Hicks and of his characteristic views; secondly, of a large number of merely nominal members, who knew or cared little for any doctrines of religion, but were recklessly determined to support the cause of free thinking, free acting, and free preaching; thirdly, and sorrowful to relate, of a class of members of honest intentions, but who knew not their right hand from their left, and were entrapped by the plausible insinuations or false representations of relatives or acquaintances, who scrupled not to assert that Elias Hicks was opposed and persecuted because he stood *for the views of the early Friends*—an assumption which caught very many, though it was as palpably false as it was illusory.*

* See T. Evans's "Exposition of the Faith of Friends;" and an anonymous book of 359 pages, 8vo. entitled "A Defence of the

This array of partisanship soon rose up wherever Elias Hicks travelled, after his unsoundness became publicly known; and his partisans plainly showed, by their boldness and determination, that no fear of consequences was likely to stop them from their purpose to carry everything before them and obtain the control of the Society. Meetings for the transaction of the discipline were thus greatly disturbed by them in many places, and made occasions of dispute and acrimonious debate, altogether at variance with the solemnity and waiting on the Lord for wisdom and strength, which ought to characterize them in common with those for divine worship.

Christian Principles of the Society of Friends, in reply to charges of the followers of E. Hicks;" published in Philadelphia in 1825; which was written by Thomas Evans, assisted by Edward Bettle and Joseph Roberts. These works, and others, completely refuted the unfounded claim of the disciples of Hicks, that they were supported by the writings of our early Friends; yet Samuel M. Janney, in the 4th vol. of his "History of Friends," has not hesitated to bring forward again the same unfounded allegation, as if it had never been contradicted. Doubtless there were many mistakes made in the zeal of that conflict, and perhaps more or less erroneous sentiments put forth in some of the many pamphlets which fluttered for a time in the storm; several of which were issued in opposition to Hicks by persons not belonging to the Society. And it is also to be conceded, that certain individuals who put themselves forward in the Society at this time, were not grounded and settled in the truth, and consequently did more harm than good by their efforts in Truth's cause. Yet there is no justification in all this for Janney's assertion, that the controversy was between ancient Quakerism as advocated by Hicks and his party, and modern Gurneyism as held by his opponents. For some further remarks on these illusory statements in regard to the doctrines involved in this convulsion, the reader is referred to the second volume of this work.

In the autumn of 1822, it became known in Philadelphia that E. Hicks was likely soon to be in the city, to visit two of its Monthly Meetings. Some of the elders were acquainted with the result of the interview between him and Joseph Whitall, mentioned above, by which his erroneous sentiments, expressed in public, had been supported by him in private. Besides this, he had recently, at the Southern Quarterly Meeting held at Little Creek, in Delaware, expressed views of the same nature, which had greatly alarmed Ezra Comfort and Isaiah Bell, a minister and an elder of Abington Quarter, who were then present. These Friends, on their return homeward, mentioned the circumstance to some members of the Select Meeting in the city, who convened at the close of the Meeting for Sufferings; Ezra Comfort desiring an opportunity of speaking with Elias. Joseph Whitall and Richard Jordan likewise informed the ministers and elders of the unsound sentiments which they had themselves heard him utter.

Two of the elders (Samuel P. Griffitts and Ellis Yarnall) accordingly called on E. Hicks when he came to the city, and informed him of E. Comfort's concern on his account, and his wish to have an interview with him.* E. Hicks twice declined to meet him on the occasion. As he was about entering upon a family visit to Green Street Monthly Meeting, the elders generally now believed it to be their duty to attend further to the matter, and endeavor to arrest the evil consequences which they foresaw from the continued dissemination of such sentiments. They, therefore, requested him to give

* See Thomas Evans's Testimony in "Foster's Report," vol. ii, p. 377.

them a private opportunity for opening to him their uneasiness, and imparting such counsel as might be requisite. But he denied in general terms the allegations, and persisted in refusing to afford any satisfactory opportunity. At length some of his own adherents advising him to submit to it, he consented, and proposed the meeting-house in Green Street as the place. When the elders arrived, instead of a private opportunity with him and his companion, as they had expected, they found a considerable company assembled with him, not only from Green Street Meeting, but from Wilmington, Byberry, and Darby. They informed him that what they had desired was to have a select private interview with himself and his companion; that such a mixed company would frustrate the object in view; and that they could not proceed to open their concern with those persons present. But he would not consent to any such thing, and they had to leave him without entering upon the matter. Soon afterwards, on the 19th of the twelfth month, they addressed a letter to him, informing him of their painful concern on his account, mentioning the nature of the charges brought against him, and reasoning with him on the inconsistency and impropriety of his conduct in refusing to meet them as proposed. This letter was signed by ten of the elders of Philadelphia, viz.: Caleb Peirce, Thomas Stewardson, Ellis Yarnall, Richard Humphreys, Samuel Powell Griffitts, Thomas Wistar, Edward Randolph, Israel Maule, Leonard Snowden, and Joseph Scattergood. To it E. Hicks replied on the 21st, vaguely denying Joseph Whitall's account, as "not *literally* true," though he did not say it was not *substantially* so; but that it was "founded on his own

forced and improper constructions" of his words; stating also that Ezra Comfort's charges were "in the general incorrect," and offering, as proof of this, a certificate signed by three of his adherents in the Southern Quarter. He sheltered himself also behind his *certificates*—charged Ezra Comfort with irregularity in not opening his dissatisfaction to *him* in the *first* place—and concluded by saying that he had refused compliance with their "requisitions, as considering them arbitrary, and contrary to the established order of our Society."

This letter elicited another from the elders, dated 4th of first month, 1823, wherein, amongst other expressions of their deep concern on his account, and the irregularity of his conduct, they say: "On a subject of such importance the most explicit candor and ingenuousness, with a readiness to hear, and to give complete satisfaction, ought ever to be maintained. This the gospel teaches, and the nature of the case imperiously demands it. As to the certificate which accompanied thy letter, made several weeks after the circumstances occurred, it is in several respects both vague and ambiguous; and in others, though in different terms, it corroborates the statement at first made." Viewing the whole subject, they express their sorrowful but unavoidable conclusion, that E. H. was holding and disseminating principles at variance with those of the Society; and conclude by saying, that he having thus closed the door against their brotherly care and endeavors for his benefit, and the clearing of our religious profession, they think the matter ought to claim the weighty attention of his friends at home.

About the same time another matter, arising from the same causes, was claiming the care of the Meeting for

Sufferings in Philadelphia, in the regular discharge of its duty to see that all publications by our members be consistent with the well-established faith of the Society.

A newspaper discussion had been carried on for some months at Wilmington, Del., involving the views of Friends on some important points of doctrine, between a Presbyterian minister, who took the name of "Paul," and a member among Friends (Benjamin Ferris), who signed "Amicus." The latter professed to speak in defence of Friends' principles; but, as the discussion proceeded, it became evident that he was one of those who had imbibed more or less of Socinian doctrines, or of Elias Hicks's views. The editor of the newspaper, after awhile, issued proposals to publish by subscription the whole discussion in the form of a book. It seemed now to be full time to clear the Society from accountability in regard to the sentiments expressed ostensibly on its account; and the Meeting for Sufferings, deliberating on the subject, felt it incumbent to step forward and do what they could to prevent the public from being led to suppose that the erroneous views thus advocated were really the sentiments of Friends, or that the author was in any way authorized to speak on behalf of the Society. With this view they prepared (by a committee consisting of John Cox, Jonathan Evans, Samuel P. Griffitts, John Comly, Samuel Bettle, Thomas Wistar, and Thomas Stewardson) some short, clear extracts from the writings of our early Friends respecting the Scriptures and the divinity and atonement of Christ, etc., and also a minute respecting the correspondence, and requested the editor of the paper (the *Christian Repository*) to publish the latter *in the intended book*, if that should

be printed. This he declined to do, on the ground of its not being agreeable to his subscribers; but he offered to print in his *newspaper* the minute, disclaiming all responsibility, on the part of the Society, for the views thus brought forward in its name. The Meeting did not feel that its own duty would by that means be fully discharged, and (at the suggestion of Samuel P. Griffitts, who mentioned that it seemed a pity that the extracts should be lost) concluded to print, in pamphlet form, a sufficient number of the extracts to supply a large distribution of them. They recorded the extracts in full among their minutes, so as to go up for sanction, as usual with the rest of their transactions, to the Yearly Meeting. It was entirely within their province to issue such a publication themselves; and it seems to be a matter of regret that they did not at once pursue that course, instead of letting the pamphlets remain locked up for several months waiting for the Yearly Meeting. It is also to be regretted, that in preparing these extracts the names of the authors from whose works they were taken were not appended, as this would have given to the collection less of the appearance of a "creed"—so odious to the followers of E. Hicks—and would have thus disarmed a considerable part at least of the factious opposition to them. The following is a copy of these celebrated extracts, so obnoxious to the followers of E. Hicks. They were extracted from the writings of George Fox, William Penn, R. Barclay, R. Claridge, and from the Declaration of Friends in 1693.*

* See William Evans's Testimony in Foster's Report, vol. ii, pp. 328 and 476.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE WRITINGS OF PRIMITIVE FRIENDS, CONCERNING THE DIVINITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST.

"At a Meeting for Sufferings held in Philadelphia, the "17th of the first month, 1823:

"An Essay, containing a few brief extracts from the "writings of our primitive Friends, on several of the doc- "trines of the Christian religion, which have been always "held, and are most surely believed by us, being produced "and read; on solid consideration, they appeared so likely "to be productive of benefit, if a publication thereof was "made and spread among our members generally, that the "committee appointed on the printing and distribution of "religious books, are directed to have a sufficient number "of them struck off, and distributed accordingly; being as "follows:

"We have always believed that the Holy Scriptures "were written by divine inspiration, that they are able to "make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ "Jesus: for, as holy men of God spake as they were moved "by the Holy Ghost, they are therefore profitable for doc- "trine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in right- "eousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly "furnished unto all good works. But they are not or can- "not be subjected to the fallen, corrupt reason of man. We "have always asserted our willingness, that all our doc- "trines be tried by them; and admit it as a positive maxim, "That whatsoever any do (pretending to the Spirit) which "is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and judged a "delusion of the devil.

"We receive and believe in the testimony of the Scrip-
"tures, simply as it stands in the text—'There are three
"'that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and
"'the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.'

"We believe in the only wise, omnipotent, and everlast-
"ing God, the creator of all things in heaven, and earth,
"and the preserver of all that He hath made, who is God
"over all blessed forever.

"The infinite and most wise God, who is the foundation,
"root, and spring of all operation, hath wrought all things
"by His eternal Word and Son. This is that Word that
"was in the beginning with God, and was God; by whom
"all things were made, and without whom was not any thing
"made that was made. Jesus Christ is the beloved and
"only begotten Son of God, who, in the fulness of time,
"through the Holy Ghost, was conceived and born of the
"virgin Mary—in Him we have redemption through His
"blood, even the forgiveness of sins. We believe that He
"was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin; that He
"was crucified for us in the flesh, was buried and rose again
"the third day by the power of His Father for our justifi-
"cation, ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the
"right hand of God.

"As then that infinite and incomprehensible Fountain of
"life and motion, operateth in the creatures by His own
"eternal word and power, so no creature has access again
"unto Him but in and by the Son, according to His own
"blessed declaration, 'No man knoweth the Father but the
"'Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.' Again,
"'I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh
"'unto the Father but by Me.' Hence He is the only

"Mediator between God and man: for having been with "God from all eternity, being Himself God, and also in "time partaking of the nature of man; through Him is "the goodness and love of God conveyed to mankind, and "by Him again man receiveth and partaketh of these mer-"cies.

"We acknowledge, that of ourselves we are not able to "do anything that is good; neither can we procure remis-"sion of sins or justification by any act of our own; but "acknowledge all to be *of* and *from* His love, which is the "original and fundamental cause of our acceptance. 'For "'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten "'Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, "'but have everlasting life.'

"We firmly believe it was necessary that Christ should "come, that, by His death and sufferings, He might offer "up Himself a sacrifice to God for our sins, who His own "self bare our sins in His own body on the tree; so we be-"lieve that the remission of sins which any partake of, is "only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, "and no otherwise. For it is by the obedience of that one, "that the free gift is come upon all to justification. Thus "Christ by His death and sufferings hath reconciled us to "God, even while we are enemies; that is, He offers recon-"ciliation to us; and we are thereby put into a capacity of "being reconciled. God is willing to be reconciled unto "us, and ready to remit the sins that are past, if we re-"pent.

"Jesus Christ is the intercessor and advocate with the "Father in heaven, appearing in the presence of God for "us, being touched with a feeling of our infirmities, suffer-

"ings, and sorrows; and also by His Spirit in our hearts,
"He maketh intercession according to the will of God, cry-
"ing Abba, Father. He tasted death for every man, shed
"His blood for all men, and is the propitiation for our sins;
"and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole
"world. He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, the cap-
"tain of our salvation, the promised seed, who bruises the
"serpent's head; the alpha and omega, the first and the
"last. He is our wisdom, righteousness, justification, and
"redemption; neither is there salvation in any other; for
"there is no other name under heaven, given among men,
"whereby we may be saved.

"As He ascended far above all heavens, that He might
"fill all things, his fulness cannot be comprehended or con-
"tained in any finite creature, but in some measure known
"and experienced in us, as we are prepared to receive the
"same; as of His fulness we have received grace for grace.
"He is both the word of faith and a quickening spirit in us,
"whereby He is the immediate cause, author, object, and
"strength of our living faith in His name and power, and
"of the work of our salvation from sin and bondage of cor-
"ruption.

"The Son of God cannot be divided from the least or
"lowest appearance of His own divine light or life in us,
"no more than the sun from its own light: nor is the suffi-
"ciency of His light within set up or mentioned in oppo-
"sition to Him, or to His fulness considered as in Himself
"or without us; nor can any measure or degree of light
"received from Christ, be properly called the fulness of
"Christ, or Christ as in fulness, nor exclude Him from
"being our complete Saviour. And where the least degree
"or measure of this light and life of Christ within, is sin-

"cerely waited in, followed, and obeyed, there is a blessed "increase of light and grace known and felt; as the path of "the just, it shines more and more until the perfect day: "and thereby a growing in grace, and in the knowledge of "God, and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, hath "been and is truly experienced.

"Wherefore we say, that whatever Christ then did, both "living and dying, was of great benefit to the salvation of "all that have believed, and now do, and that hereafter "shall believe in Him unto justification and acceptance "with God: but the way to come to that faith, is to receive "and obey the manifestation of His divine Light and grace "in the conscience, which leads men to believe and value, "and not to disown or undervalue Christ, as the common sac-"rifice and mediator. For we do affirm, that to follow this "holy light in the conscience, and to turn our minds, and "bring all our deeds and thoughts to it, is the readiest, nay "the only right way, to have true, living, and sanctifying "faith in Christ, as he appeared in the flesh; and to dis-"cern the Lord's Body, coming, and sufferings aright, and "to receive any real benefit by Him as our only sacrifice "and mediator; according to the beloved disciple's em-"phatical testimony, 'If we walk in the light, as He (God) "'is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and "'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all "'sin.'

"By the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ without us, we, "truly repenting and believing, are, through the mercy of "God, justified from the imputation of sins and transgres-"sions that are past, as though they had never been com-"mitted: and by the mighty work of Christ within us, the "power, nature, and habits of sin are destroyed; that as sin

"once reigned unto death, even so now grace reigneth "through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ "our Lord.

"Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

"JONATHAN EVANS,

"Clerk."

When the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings came in due course to be read in the Yearly Meeting of 1823, the fact of these Extracts forming a part of them, and thus being proposed for the sanction of the Yearly Meeting, raised a great storm against them on the part of Elias Hicks's adherents. Several of them disapproved of the doctrines as stated in the Extracts,* but the main ostensible ground of the opposition to them was, that this was an attempt on the part of the Meeting for Sufferings to "*impose a creed*" on the Society, and that by and by every member would be compelled to subscribe to it. The excitement was such that the meeting adjourned till the next morning.

A proposal was then made by the opponents of the Extracts, that they should be expunged or stricken from the minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings. But this was firmly objected to, as it would have the appearance and effect of a disavowal of the doctrines therein mentioned, which were no other than those of the ancient Friends who were concerned in the establishment of the Society. The opposition continuing very vociferous, Samuel Bettle, the clerk of the Yearly Meeting, in order, in some way, to settle the question, at length proposed, "to avoid both difficulties by simply *suspending* the publication,

.* See S. Bettle's Testimony, in Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 72.

not taking it off the minutes, and not circulating the pamphlets, but *leaving the subject.*" This compromise was acquiesced in, and the matter so settled. But the advantage gained by this important concession tended to encourage the promoters of the new views to further assaults, not only on the Meeting for Sufferings, but also on the meetings of ministers and elders; and the next three or four years exhibited various attempts made by them to alter the constitution of each of those meetings, by urging arbitrary changes of the representation in the former, and likewise in the appointments to the station of Elder, in a manner believed to be hitherto unknown in the discipline or practice of Friends. This was in the hope of obtaining for their party a controlling influence in those departments of the Society.*

In Monthly Meetings, where they had the control, they went to great lengths. Thus, Ezra Comfort and Isaiah Bell were disowned by them for the part they had taken in making known to the elders in Philadelphia the unsound doctrines preached by Elias Hicks at the Southern Quarterly Meeting in 1822. These

* The adherents of this party endeavored in various ways to stir up popular feeling against the Elders of Philadelphia, and the members of the Meeting for Sufferings; publishing scurrilous pamphlets, with caricatures; one, for instance, representing Samuel Bettle, the clerk of the Yearly Meeting, with a *balance* in his hand, taking the *weight* of Jonathan Evans in one scale, against a dozen or so of Hicksites in the other; one representing a "hole in the wall" (Ezekiel 8 : 7–12), disclosing what the *Elders were doing in the dark;* and one representing Jonathan Evans (clerk of the Meeting for Sufferings), sitting at a desk preparing "*the Creed,*" with a *yoke* and *fetters* hanging near him, etc.

Friends, however, were afterwards restored by appeal. Leonard Snowden and Joseph Scattergood (son of Thomas Scattergood, the minister), elders of Green Street Monthly Meeting, in Philadelphia, were, in 1824, declared out of unity by that meeting, on account of their opposition to the doctrines and course of Elias Hicks. The subject was carried to the Select Quarterly Meeting, and several months were spent by a committee in vainly endeavoring to settle the difficulty; during which time Joseph Scattergood was taken away by death. The Monthly Meeting persisted in its position, and, finding that the committee was about to counsel them adversely to their action in the case, undertook summarily to displace the survivor, Leonard Snowden, from his station as an Elder. On the committee reporting this to the Select Quarterly Meeting, the case appeared to have assumed a form in which the consideration of the Quarterly Meeting for discipline became needful, and the Select Meeting accordingly referred the matter to its care. Leonard Snowden also appealed to the Quarterly Meeting, believing that the due maintenance of our Christian principles and discipline were involved in the case; that it was unprecedented, and likely to prove a dangerous example, subversive of the peace and well-being of the Society.

His right of appeal was denied by the Green Street members, on the ground that though they had by minute declared him to be in such a degree of disunity as to have lost his service in the select meeting, yet they had not actually disowned him from membership. They seemed to lose sight of the fact, that the discipline gives the right of appeal to members who may apprehend

themselves "aggrieved," without limiting it to cases of disownment; and according to the general understanding among Friends, to declare a person out of unity by a minute of the meeting, has been considered nearly if not quite equivalent to a disownment. It deprives him at least of the liberty of being employed in any service of the church, or of his sentiment in meetings for discipline being received as having any weight. When the appeal came to be considered in the Quarterly Meeting, the members of Green Street Meeting clamorously opposed it, some of them speaking, during one sitting, fifteen times or more to the case, and one man was known to speak as many as thirty-two times; so that the sittings of the Quarterly Meetings were often greatly protracted by their clamorous harangues.*

After much discussion from quarter to quarter, for seven Quarterly Meetings, it was concluded in the fifth month, 1826, to carry up the question to the Yearly Meeting, for its advice and assistance, as a case of difficulty; and as the Yearly Meeting for that year had then just passed, the matter was thus delayed for another year. But the disturbances in the Yearly Meeting of 1827 were such, that the case could not receive careful and deliberate adjustment, and it was referred back to Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting. That meeting accordingly appointed a committee for the deliberate examination and consideration of the case; and at the next Quarterly Meeting (in the eighth month) this committee reported, clearing Leonard Snowden from any just cause of disunity or want of qualification for service in the church,

* Thomas Evans's testimony in Foster's Report, vol. ii, p. 381

and charging Green Street Monthly Meeting (which had, however, in the meantime gone off in the separation) with acting in the case inconsistently with the provisions of the discipline. L. Snowden was of course now restored to his place in the church, and confirmed in the station which he had faithfully occupied for many years.

The same Monthly Meeting of Green Street, in 1826, summarily displaced two of their female elders, Mary Taylor and Ann Scattergood, on the same ground as they had against L. Snowden and J. Scattergood. But these friends appealing to the Quarterly Meeting, the action of the Monthly Meeting was, in the second month, 1827, declared irregular and annulled.

The withstanding of an assault upon the regular permanent constitution of the Meeting for Sufferings made by the Southern Quarterly Meeting (in which the adherents of E. Hicks had the control), tended afresh to fan the embers of confusion and discord into flames. In 1826, that Quarterly Meeting, at the instigation of Abm. Lower, of Philadelphia, undertook to change its representatives in the Meeting for Sufferings, who were mainly opposed to the new views, and therefore not satisfactory to the controlling party. The discipline recognized no such practice as changing the representation, unless on account of death, resignation, or continued absence from the meetings; and arbitrary changes had not been known since that meeting was established on its then present basis, especially without any disqualifying cause assigned. The Yearly Meeting had already, in 1825, refused to accede to a proposal from Bucks Quarterly Meeting, to alter the discipline so that all important appointments (by which they meant chiefly

elders and members of the Meeting for Sufferings) should be made only for a limited time. But in this instance a new set of representatives was peremptorily appointed, without alleging any cause for dismissing the old ones, and even without informing all of them (if any of them) of their dismissal. When the new representatives presented themselves, the meeting declined to recognize them, considering the matter altogether unexampled and out of order; but after considering the case for three months, a committee was appointed to confer with the Southern Quarterly Meeting on the subject, and inform them of the reasons for their not consenting to the new nomination. The disaffected in that Quarterly Meeting were highly offended. At the Meeting for Sufferings in the third month, 1827, this committee reported, that they had attended the Quarterly Meeting held at Little Creek, Delaware, and opened to them the difficulty of the case, as it was viewed in the Meeting for Sufferings; assuring the Quarterly Meeting "that the Meeting for Sufferings "did not assume the privilege of interfering with the "appointment of representatives—that the right of the "Quarterly Meeting to select such friends as they might "deem suitable for the service, and also to fill all vacan-"cies that might from time to time occur, was not ques-"tioned. The Meeting for Sufferings never had at-"tempted to interfere on this subject—the difficulty that "presented on the present occasion arose from a belief "that no vacancy had occurred. The discipline estab-"lishing the Meeting for Sufferings directs, that twelve "friends shall be appointed by the Yearly Meeting, "and four out of each of the quarters; the only cases "which constitute a vacancy, and which call for a re-

"appointment are death, resignation, or neglect of at-
"tendance; and the uniform practice of society for
"seventy years,* has been in accordance with the disci-
"pline, which could only be altered by the Yearly
"Meeting; for we apprehended it must appear manifest,
"that some fixed general rule was indispensable, or
"otherwise each of the Quarterly Meetings might change
"the discipline or practice, as from time to time, circum-
"stances might induce them to think a change desira-
"ble." . . . . After some further observations, the committee concluded with the information that the Quarterly Meeting was informed that the Meeting for Sufferings, in view of the difficulty, and yet "desirous of avoiding "any collision with a Quarterly Meeting," had appointed this Committee, "if they should think proper to sepa-
"rate a committee for the purpose, to enter into a full
"consideration of the whole subject, with a hope that
"such a conference might result in some conclusion
"which would be to mutual satisfaction. The Quarterly
"Meeting, however," say they, "declined appointing a
"committee, or in any way explaining their views of
"the subject."

This report being entered on the minutes, the matter thus stood at the time of the Yearly Meeting in the fourth month, 1827.

Elias Hicks made another visit to Philadelphia in the winter of 1826, and fully confirmed the apprehensions which his previous visits had excited. His presence also doubtless tended to animate his adherents in the pursuit

* In the very early times of the Meeting for Sufferings in Pennsylvania, it is believed there were instances of changes made by Quarterly Meetings. See Foster's Report, vol. ii, p. 49.

of those measures which a few months afterwards resulted in the separation.

The spring of 1827 found the elements for this work actively in operation. The Society was like a volcano, smoking and inwardly thundering, and almost ready to burst forth into flame.

Bucks Quarterly Meeting, in which the Hicks party predominated, prepared a proposal to go to the Yearly Meeting, for a change in the discipline, so that Elders might be removed by Monthly Meetings "whenever it might appear that their service in that station has ceased to promote the best interests of the Society;" in other words, whenever a Monthly Meeting might, with or without just cause, be desirous of a change. And Abington Quarter, in which the same influence prevailed, prepared a similar proposal, relative to the appointment of Elders, and members of the Meeting for Sufferings, with a view that such appointments be made for a limited time.

John Comly, a minister of Byberry, near Philadelphia, and occupying the position of assistant clerk to the Yearly Meeting, travelled over a great portion of the country within the limits of the Yearly Meeting, under the profession of ministerial service, and in various places held private meetings with certain of the members, in order to bring about a division of the Society. He himself acknowledged afterwards to Samuel Bettle,* that he had held about forty such meetings, and with that intent.†

* See S. Bettle's Testimony, in Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 68.

† John Comly, in his Journal, mentions a considerable number of these conferences, the object of which, he says, was for the pur-

It was deemed by the party highly desirable to take measures to secure the choice of a clerk to the coming Yearly Meeting, of their own sentiments, so as to enable them to control the action of the meeting in accordance with the new views. If this could be accomplished, they trusted that they would have gained the wide road to success. But if not, many of the leaders at least were resolved on a separation, in accordance with John Comly's contrivances. As the nomination of a clerk would devolve, according to custom, on the representatives as a body, it was seen that an important point would be, that their party should preponderate in numbers when the representatives should meet, respecting the nomination. Abington and Bucks Quarters accordingly each doubled their usual number of representatives, and the Southern Quarter increased theirs by one half; while

pose of making "a quiet retreat," and "becoming distinct and separate as a society" (p. 314) and (p. 316), "a separation of the contending parties into *two distinct religious bodies.*" He speaks of the disturbance in the Society as having been caused and promoted by a "spirit or image of jealousy" and "stretch of arbitrary power," first developed in New England (p. 303), and "denunciations against infidelity and other imagined absurdities," and fully acknowledges a difference of doctrine, but nowhere attempts to refute the charges brought against him and his associates, of a departure from the faith of the gospel. He speaks of his partisans as "little lambs" (p. 335), and "afflicted lambs of Christ" (p. 336), but acknowledges (p. 335) that at the ensuing Quarterly Meeting of Abington, held at Horsham, there was "a scene of apparent disorder—when *many voices simultaneously* resounded from all parts of the house, in vindication of rights and privileges dear to every friend of peace, of truth, and of order." Of course, these "many simultaneous voices" were bleatings from the "little lambs!"

the Quarters where the party did not control affairs, made no such increase. This was the condition of things on the approach of the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia in 1827.

The Select Yearly Meeting, or Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, assembled as usual on the seventh-day of the week immediately preceding the General Yearly Meeting, viz., on the 14th of the fourth month. On attending to the Answers to the Queries addressed to Meetings of Ministers and Elders, it was found that Philadelphia Quarter, in its answer to the second query —"Are ministers sound in word and doctrine, and careful to minister in the ability which God gives?"—had mentioned that unsoundness existed in the ministry among them, and that one of its branches had stated "that much pain and exercise had been experienced on account of persons coming among them, promulgating sentiments or doctrines, tending to lay waste a belief in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The meeting being brought under much concern on this account, it was, at the suggestion of William Jackson, after solid consideration, concluded to appoint a committee, to visit the Select Quarterly and Preparative Meetings, and endeavor "to extend such advice and assistance as might conduce to the health of the body and the welfare of individuals." There was opposition made to this appointment by some; but it settled as the mature and genuine judgment of the meeting. At the adjourned meeting, however, on the next fourth-day, the 18th, John Comly made an effort to have the appointment rescinded, and finding that his attempts were of no avail,

he rose soon after the subject was dismissed, and bade the meeting "an affectionate farewell."*

The Yearly Meeting assembled, in due course, on second-day morning, the 16th of the month, and entered on its business as usual, Samuel Bettle and John Comly being at the table as the clerk and assistant clerk of the previous year. At the close of the morning sitting, the representatives, according to custom, remained together in the same house as a committee to consider of a choice for clerk and assistant clerk, to propose to the Yearly Meeting in the afternoon. There were one hundred and sixty-three representatives appointed, and they were nearly all present, being thirty-three more than the usual number, on account of the additions made by the three Quarterly Meetings where the Hicks party predominated. It was usual, after a pause, to deliberate first on the question, whether it were desirable to make any change, by releasing the former clerk. But almost as soon as the representatives had got together, and before they were quietly settled, some one of the party promptly proposed the name of John Comly for clerk. This was objected to by others, as being premature, before they had decided whether any change should be proposed. John Comly's name, however, was urged by a number with great earnestness, while others expressed their preference for the former clerk, as no objections had been stated against Samuel Bettle, who had been nominated the previous year, without dissent; and especially as it was well known that John Comly had been going up and down the country, holding private meet-

* William Evans's Testimony, in Foster's Report, vol. ii, p. 331.

ings to prepare the way for a separation; a course which formed an insuperable objection to him for that service in the minds of many friends. The advocates of John Comly clamorously asserted that they were the majority, and therefore ought to sway the choice of the committee. The others doubted the assertion, but insisted that it had never been the practice of Friends to be governed by mere majorities in religious matters, and that in this case there would be a particular injustice in being urged to that unusual mode of choice, inasmuch as several of the Quarterly Meetings had so largely increased their representation, while the rest had no more than usual. The party urged, however, that it should be settled by a vote, and Abraham Lower, who had been throughout very active on behalf of John Comly, soon called on a certain John Watson to go to the table, and draw up a minute proposing him for the service. John, feeling somewhat discouraged at the strength of the opposition to such a course, did not seem disposed to obey the summons, and excused himself from so serious an undertaking. Abraham then, still bent upon his purpose, proposed that those who were in favor of John Comly should go over to the eastern side of the house. He rose, and took a few steps in that direction, and a few others rose also. But the measure was so decidedly opposed by a considerable number of Friends, that this effort also failed. One member urging the manifest injustice of it under the present circumstances of increased numbers from Abington, Bucks, and the Southern Quarter, and intimating that if they were to be urged to vote, they ought, in the first place, to decide which of them had a *right* to vote, and who had not; this excited

some of them from those three Quarterly Meetings, and especially one Cephas Ross, of Bucks Quarter; who made a pretty long harangue, and cried out, more than once, in an irreverent manner, that "he had his commission from God Almighty, and would give it up to no man!" Friends were shocked at these and other such declarations, and John Cox, of Burlington, rose and remarked, that "there was a degree of decency and respect due to one another on all occasions, both in civil and religious society, and it ought to be observed;" adding further remarks on the impropriety of disregarding this duty. Abraham Lower became greatly roused at finding that Friends were neither to be led nor driven into a compliance with his measures, and began to reflect on those opposed to him, as "the few who wished to rule over the many." Several hours were thus exhausted in altercation, and it became very evident that no united agreement could be arrived at. It was at length proposed that John Cox should report to the Yearly Meeting, "that way did not open in the minds of the representatives to release Samuel Bettle." But this was objected to, several of John Comly's advocates saying that in their minds way *did* open for it. The proposal was therefore modified, so that John Cox should simply report, "that the representatives could not agree on any name to offer to the meeting as clerk." This proposition gaining approval even from some of John Comly's friends, Abraham Lower became alarmed, and twice called out to them, "to take care what they were about; for if no name was proposed to the Yearly Meeting, Samuel Bettle would be the clerk as a matter of course." This, however, seemed to be all the report that could be made,

and John Cox was requested to convey it on behalf of the representatives. They were about to disperse, when Abraham Lower a third time represented to his party, "that if no name was reported, S. Bettle would be the clerk;" and called upon all those who were favorable to the appointment of John Comly, to come up to the clerk's table and sign a report to that effect. He with perhaps eight or ten others* went up accordingly to the table, and a certain Marden Wilson began to write. But it was a little too late. The representatives were then dispersing. The hour for the afternoon sitting of the Yearly Meeting had very nearly if not quite arrived, and many were waiting to come in; and as some of the representatives opened the door to go out, the members began to flow into the house, so that those who were usurping the clerk's table quickly withdrew, and this scheme also was baffled.†

Soon after the Yearly Meeting became settled for the afternoon sitting, John Cox reported, on behalf of the representatives, that they had not been able to agree on any name to propose to the meeting as clerk. Several proposals followed this announcement, but William Jackson rose and mentioned that he had attended Yearly Meetings since the year 1767 (now sixty years), and the practice had been that the old clerks continued in service until new names were brought forward and agreed to. Many friends expressed approval of such a course in the present instance; but others opposed it, and some of these suggested that the present clerks should merely

* See Foster's Report. Cephas Ross said about twenty.

† For this whole proceeding, see Testimony of William Evans and John Paul, in Foster's Report, vol. ii, pp. 332 and 339.

serve for that afternoon, and the representatives should be directed to meet again, and determine the question by the majority. This of course was firmly objected to, and no probability appeared of the representatives coming nearer to agreement than they had already done. The proposal for the old clerks to continue to act for the meeting was largely approved, and was at length acquiesced in even by some of John Comly's advocates. A short pause at length occurring, Samuel Bettle made a minute desiring the former clerks to continue to serve the meeting. As soon, however, as it was read, it was strongly opposed by the Hicks party; but at length the opposition ceased, and John Comly expressed his willingness, "in condescension to the views of his friends," to act as assistant clerk. The usual business then went on for a short time, and the meeting adjourned to the next morning; when John Comly rose, and declared that there were two irreconcilable parties, and that he could not conscientiously serve a meeting so circumstanced as its organ. He then proposed an *adjournment of the Yearly Meeting*, without any time mentioned for its ever reassembling. So strange and extreme a measure met with but feeble support, and John Comly finally acquiesced in the desire, expressed by many, that he should resume his seat at the table. After this, he acted as assistant clerk without further difficulty, and the business of the meeting went on as usual, his adherents taking part in some of the matters that came before it, especially in promoting a subscription to be raised through the subordinate meetings to supply funds for the removal of several hundred colored people from Carolina, where

they were in danger of being sold as slaves unless speedily removed from the State.

On third-day afternoon Ann Jones, of Stockport, England, came into the men's meeting by permission, and, after a solemn pause, kneeled in supplication, commencing with the words of the eightieth Psalm: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock, thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth!" and interceded with much earnestness for the ancient and honorable fathers in the Church, for the strong men in Christ Jesus, for the young men in our Israel, and for the children in the Lord's house—then on behalf of such as had been in some degree beguiled by the great adversary of their souls, and in measure entangled in his snares, but as regarded whom a door of mercy still remained open—that such might be prevailed on to close in with the offered salvation, before it might be too late, and every avenue closed up. Soon afterward, standing up, she was largely engaged in testimony, addressing the state last alluded to in her prayer, with much weight, and solemnly warning them to flee from the temptation; to flee for their very lives; to beware of the stratagem of the emissaries of Satan, those who were endeavoring to persuade them that there was no devil, while at the same time he was holding fast in his embrace many of those who were thus denying his existence. After many other observations, she said, that leaving those who were rebellious and hardening the heart and stiffening the neck against God, to their own delusions and vain imaginations, and to the just judgment of a righteous God, she wished to address herself to the faithful followers of Jesus Christ, those who loved

Him and his cause more than their own lives, and who desired above all things to be found faithful to Him, standing in their lot, and filling up with holy diligence the appointed measure of duty and suffering. She addressed also the fearful and the faint with sweet encouragement, exhorting them to trust in the Lord, and cast all their care on him, who cared for them, and whom they would find all-sufficient for his own cause in every storm and conflict. To the worthy heads of the tribes who were standing in the forefront of the battle, and who had to endure revilings and reproaches for the name of Christ and for their faithfulness and uprightness to Him, she spoke in a very consoling manner, reciting the beautiful passage from Genesis, where Jacob pronounced this blessing on his son Joseph: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob—(from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel)—even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee." She then addressed some who had known what it was to be separated from their brethren, assuring them of her faith and belief that they would, as they stood fast in their fidelity to Christ Jesus and his holy cause, experience that blessing to be fulfilled which was poured "on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of Him that was separate from his brethren." To the humble, faithful disciples of every class, she had much of a precious and consoling nature to hand forth, and concluded with a recital of some sub-

lime passages of Holy Scripture, strikingly portraying the care and protection of the Almighty over his Church and people.

Almost as soon as she had taken her seat, one of the Hicks party, in a taunting manner, exclaimed: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from thee!" And another called out: "Friends, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees!" She sat very quietly for a few moments, and then withdrew.*

The Hicks party held several private meetings among themselves during that week, and matured their plans for a separation. On the evening of sixth-day, the 20th, they held a large assemblage in Green Street meeting-house, and agreed on an address to the members of the Yearly Meeting. This address contained plausible professions of admiration of the faithfulness of our early Friends, and of their noble stand for "the glorious "truth, that God alone is the sovereign Lord of con- "science." Then, coming to our own days, they thus expressed their idea of the grievances they were subjected to: "We are constrained to declare, that the "unity of this body [the Yearly Meeting] is inter- "rupted; that a division exists among us, developing "in its progress views which appear incompatible with "each other, and feelings averse to a reconciliation. "Doctrines held by one part of society, and which we be- "lieve to be sound and edifying, are pronounced by the "other part to be unsound and spurious. From this has

* The above account of Ann Jones's communication is taken from a manuscript which, there is reason to believe, was written originally by Thomas Evans.

"resulted a state of things that has proved destructive "of peace and tranquillity, and in which the fruits of "love and condescension have been blasted, and the "comforts and enjoyments even of social intercourse "greatly diminished. Measures have been pursued "which we deem oppressive, and in their nature and "tendency calculated to undermine and destroy those "benefits, to establish and perpetuate which should be "the purpose of every religious association." After some further remarks, respecting order, discipline, and forbearance, which (if they had but known it) reflected back with double force upon their own conduct, they said: "It is under a solemn and deliberate view of this "painful state of our affairs that we feel bound to ex- "press to you, under a settled conviction of mind, that "the period has fully come, in which we ought to look "towards making a quiet retreat from this scene of con- "fusion; and we therefore recommend to you deeply to "weigh the momentous subject, and to adopt such a "course as truth, under solid and solemn deliberation, "may point to, in furtherance of this object, that our "Society may again enjoy the free exercise of its "rights and privileges," etc., etc. This paper was signed on behalf of the meeting by John Comly* and

* What were the views entertained by John Comly in regard to the "divinity of Christ," and the atoning efficacy of his "blood," may be gathered from what he has himself acknowledged in the Journal of his Life, printed since his decease (page 350), in relating his answers to certain questions put to him at the close of a meeting in New Jersey in 1827: "At the close a person advanced forward to speak to us, and, with apparent diffidence, said, he wished to ask a question, ... which he did,

nine others. It places the ground of difference distinctly on doctrines—"doctrines, which we believe to be sound and edifying, are pronounced by the other part to be unsound and spurious. *From this* has resulted a state of things," etc.

thus addressing himself to me: 'Do you believe that Christ was the Son of Joseph or the Son of God?' I answered: 'The latter, undoubtedly. I never had a doubt of the Divinity of Christ. I have no idea of a Christ that is the son of Joseph.' He replied: 'Then you believe that we have access to God through his blood, do you?' 'Certainly,' said I. 'Very well,' said he, 'I am fully satisfied.' He was called [adds John Comly] a Methodist minister, and when he went out, he told others he was perfectly satisfied. Whatever external or material ideas he attached to the terms of his question, *the answers* were given *with reference to the spirituality* of Christ, and the blood that cleanseth from all sin, which cannot be material blood, because matter cannot cleanse spirit, and the soul that is defiled by sin needs a spiritual cleansing, through which it finds access to God." Thus he allowed this serious inquirer to go away *imposed upon* by an *insidious* answer according to his own confession! On another occasion (Journal, p. 395), in answer to another inquirer, he discarded any confidence in the "outward blood;" and in reference to the atonement said, "I told him I could not find the term 'propitiatory sacrifice' in the Scriptures, and the application of such a term to the death of Jesus on the cross I thought unwarrantable," etc. On page 400, etc, is found an elaborate attempt to reason away a belief in the existence of "the Devil;" and on page 424 he says, "Whenever the laws of animal nature, or the lusts of the flesh, prompt to the pursuit of animal happiness, beyond the limitations of this superior law of the mind or soul, its restraining or controlling power is felt by the obedient mind; and a cross or death is known to the first inclination or motion of desire for what is beyond this boundary. *This is the death of Jesus to sin*, which man is called to imitate." Might not such doctrines as these, with the more open avowals of Elias Hicks, sanctioned by the same John Comly and by the party generally, rightly be "denounced as unsound and spurious" by all true Christians?

At the meeting on sixth-day evening, when they agreed on the above document, Charles Evans, then a young man, son of Jonathan Evans, was present with a view to see for himself what they were about. His presence, it appears, was not much noticed in the dusk of evening, and in such a crowd as was then assembled, according to J. Comly's estimate (*Journal*, p. 333) about seven or eight hundred.

At the sitting on seventh-day morning,* I think after attending to the epistles addressed to other Yearly Meetings, a proposal was brought in from the Women's Meeting, suggesting for the consideration of the Men's Meeting the appointment of a committee to visit the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, for their strength and encouragement. This proposal greatly roused again the heated feelings of the Hicks party, who saw in it a thwarting, to some extent at least, of their sweeping prospects. They came out clamorously against it, several of them often on their feet speaking simultaneously, and seemed bent on bearing down all advocacy of it by noise and tumult. Instead of being willing to hear those on the other side of the question with the same forbearance that was exercised toward themselves, they would endeavor to drown the voices of Friends by clamor, coughing, and other needless or rude noises.

Many Friends became much discouraged, and were

* That morning I attended the Yearly Meeting for the first time, having landed from Liverpool the previous evening. It was the last sitting, and made a memorable impression on a mind unaccustomed to such scenes as then presented. It was the first time I had ever heard the divinity of Christ called in question in a Friends' meeting, and this was by Abraham Lower.

almost ready to give up the proposed appointment, however desirable, seeing the tumultuous state the meeting was in. But after the Hicks party had nearly exhausted themselves, Charles Evans rose, and mentioned to the meeting what had occurred the previous evening, and that many of those who had now opposed the appointment of the committee were among the company who had held this private meeting, and drawn up an Address, complaining of their pretended grievances, and inciting the members to separation. This development soon put another face on the deliberation, and Friends came forth clearly and decidedly for the appointment, seeing the imperative necessity for it under such circumstances. Some one of the Hicks party attempted to deny the truth of C. Evans's account; but he appealed to John Comly to say if what he had stated was not correct, and John Comly remained silent.*

Several of the party candidly acknowledged the general accuracy of his relation of the facts. They seemed stumbled, and brought to a stand, and knew not what further to do to arrest the measure, and a large and general expression of approval of the appointment took place over the meeting, leaving no reasonable ground for doubt that such was the solid judgment of the truly concerned

* John Comly, in his Journal, p. 331, calls him "a spy," and adds, "His statement being denied by a conspicuous Friend, he called on me by name to clear him of the charge of falsehood, or correct him. But I saw and felt the spirit he was in, and in perfect composure and calmness remained silent, as knowing that I was professedly in a Yearly Meeting, where no such altercations and disputations should be allowed, and therefore 'answered him not a word.'"

and faithful members generally, and consequently the judgment of the meeting. The Hicksian party then determined to take no part in the nomination. A committee was accordingly appointed, consisting of Hinchman Haines, Thomas Wistar, Joseph Whitall, Thomas Stewardson, Jonathan Evans, Samuel Bettle, Edward Temple, Christopher Healy, Benjamin Cooper, John Comfort of Solebury, Abraham Pennell, and William Newbold; to unite with a similar appointment of the women's meeting.

During this last sitting, the minutes were all read over as usual towards the close of the Yearly Meeting. No objection was made to them; and the concluding minute, adjourning the meeting to the usual time and place the next year, if the Lord permit, was also read without a single objection.* The Hicks party thus acquiesced in the authority and regularity of all the transactions.

Near the close, after a silence of great solemnity, Christopher Healy revived the passage from the *Revelation* (chapter 15 : 3), "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints! Who shall not fear thee, and glorify thy name?" As the members were leaving the house, John Comly said to Samuel Bettle, in reply to a remark of the latter respecting the two classes into which the meeting was now divided, "You will be sustained, but what will become of us, I do not know!"

Thus ended this memorable Yearly Meeting, so fraught with consequences of a very serious nature to many poor

* S. Bettle's Testimony, in Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 70.

unsuspecting souls, blinded and drawn into a fearful vortex by false brethren.

But the acquiescence of the party, if it may be called so, was merely temporary. Their leaders at least had not abandoned their designs of establishing a Society in which they could have the control, and do as they pleased, having, as they expressed it in one of their Epistles, "a ministry unshackled by human authority." They went to work at once and in earnest with their plans for dividing the Society, after the Yearly Meeting was over, and met again in the Green Street meeting-house according to their adjournment, on the 4th and 5th of the ensuing sixth month, with William Gibbons and B. Ferris, for clerk and assistant, the one editor of the "Berean," and the other the writer of the letters under the name of Amicus, in the "Christian Repository."* They now issued another Address, reiterating their own views of the causes of the state of things in the Society—undisciplinary combinations, interruptions of ministers travelling, unjust and "unfounded" charges of holding "infidel doctrines"—the imposition of a clerk on the Yearly Meeting contrary to the sense of "the greater part" of the Representatives—the appointment of a committee to visit the meetings contrary to the judgment of the "larger number" then present—that, contrary to their hopes, the spirit of discord had gained strength, and that "there now appeared no way to regain the harmony and "tranquillity of the body, but by withdrawing (not from "the Society of Friends and its discipline, but) from re-

* "It was thought upwards of a thousand were in attendance." John Comly's Journal, p. 338.

"ligious communion with those who have introduced, "and seem disposed to continue such disorders." They therefore proposed the "holding of a Yearly Meeting for "Friends in unity with us," and encouraged such "Quarterly and Monthly Meetings as 'may be prepared "'for such a measure,'" to appoint representatives, to meet in Philadelphia on the third second-day of the 10th month ensuing.

Meantime they took all possible measures to increase their numbers by misrepresentation and the promotion of prejudices and animosities, and to seize the meeting-houses; and the latter they did with such success, that in Pennsylvania there were very few meeting-houses left to the Society, except four of the five in the city. It would be extremely irksome, and unprofitable too, here to detail the many acts of disorder and rude outrage, by which they accomplished their purposes in this respect. Let them rest in oblivion.* But it is needful, as an essential part of history, to allude to some further transactions by which the separation was made complete over the several Yearly Meetings. For the same causes operated, and produced similar fruits, wherever Elias Hicks's influence extended.

The party met again, as proposed, on the 15th of the tenth month, 1827; and this time they assumed for their assembly the name of "the Yearly Meeting of

* If any should desire further to pursue this branch of the sad subject, they may find ample details of disorder and wrong, even to satiety, in the first and second volumes of "The Friend," Philadelphia, 1827 and 1828. But I apprehend that in many of these cases, both classes were too hasty and determined, though the *acts of outrage* were principally on the part of the Hicksites.

Friends, held in Philadelphia," irrespective of the fact that they knew there was already a Yearly Meeting of that name, which they had never disowned as not being a Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. They had, it is true, separated themselves from its jurisdiction in a way which they undertook to support; but they had never shown gospel order in manifesting a justifying cause for such a separation, nor had they taken upon them to disown those who adhered to it, as being engaged in supporting a false position. Their title, therefore, amounted to the assumption, that there could be two Yearly Meetings of the same Society, in one place, but independent of, and even antagonistic to one another.

Here again they issued an address, or "Epistle to the Quarterly, Monthly and Particular Meetings," signed by Benjamin Ferris and Rebecca B. Comly, as clerks of the men's and women's meetings. It contained many truisms plausibly stated, and considerable salutary advice, deprecating "the influence of party feeling"—"airy speculations on religious subjects"—the "seizing of the discipline as a sword, in the spirit of violence,"—and with remarkable adaptation to the propensities so frequently manifested by a considerable number of their own active members, they exhorted, "that our religious "testimonies may never be wounded by contending for "property and asserting our rights."

I am far from believing that there were not in that assembly men and women who participated in sending forth that advice to their members, with a sincere, or at least an honest belief, that they were promoting the true cause of the Society. The most industrious efforts had

been used and were being used, to gain over all such as, through any weakness of judgment or affection, might slide unwarily within their influence; and many thus joined them, who at the time had no idea of sanctioning and encouraging, as their presence and accord undoubtedly did, the latitudinarian views, if not the infidel principles, and the disorderly practices, of the leaders in this schism. But having given away their spiritual strength, by joining in with some of the measures of this wild spirit, at first perhaps covered over with smooth words and fine speech, they became involved in the vortex, lost their power of escape from it, and incurred a fearful responsibility with and for the body to which they had united themselves.

The same causes which led to these deplorable events within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, were producing similar results in those of New York, Ohio, Baltimore, and Indiana; and we must briefly glance at them, to show the completion of the schism.

I attended the Yearly Meeting of New York of 1827, which occurred a few weeks after that of Philadelphia; but the separation of the Hicks party, though commenced in some of the subordinate meetings, did not occur in the Yearly Meeting itself till 1828.

At the Yearly Meeting held in New York in 1827, the meetings for worship were greatly disturbed by unsound preaching, especially by one Phebe Johnson, whom we have already met with as connected with the ranterism about New Bedford, Lynn, etc., four or five years before, and who had now joined the Hicks party. Thomas Shillitoe (who, with George and Ann Jones, and E. Robson, attended this meeting from England)

zealously exposed, and opposed with sound doctrine the dreadful unsoundness of her sentiments, and called on the faithful members of the Society to put a stop to such utterances. Elias Hicks was present as usual, and I thought the darkness of his spirit and that of others of their leaders was sensibly to be felt in the several sittings. But as to the actual enunciation of unsound doctrine on that occasion, Elias kept somewhat moderate; enough probably having been said *for* him on those subjects by others of his party, and he knowing that he was then under the eye of men and women who were not slow to detect such errors, nor wanting in a preparation to testify against them faithfully before the people.

His party made several attempts by clamor to obtain control of the proceedings of the meeting; but many friends from the country parts, and some also from the city and its neighborhood, standing firm for the testimonies of the Society, they failed at that time in their attempts to revolutionize the Yearly Meeting; though they came forth at intervals with much determination, vociferating their sentiments two or three at a time, and expressing their aversion to hearing those opposed to their plans, by coughing, scraping with their feet, stamping with their canes, and other rude noises, such as characterize popular assemblies rather than the meetings of Friends. In the women's meeting also, I was informed there was much dissension, during which Sarah Hicks, a niece of Elias Hicks by marriage, was said to have been on her feet more than one hundred times in two sittings!

The autumn of 1827 saw the formation, in Philadelphia, of an association of a number of members, mostly rather young men, and ardent opponents of Hicksism,

for the publication of a weekly paper, entitled "The Friend, a Religious and Literary Journal." Its intent was to promote within the Society the circulation of literary and scientific information, free from objectionable matter, and also to defend the Society from the misrepresentations of the seceders, and to furnish wholesome religious and other reading for the youth, suited to the tastes of Friends. The object aimed at appeared desirable, and the paper seemed for many years to give general satisfaction in the Society. Yet some Friends have often had fears, that divine wisdom was not enough consulted in its establishment, and that its course in regard to religious matters was at times not entirely consistent with our well-known principle, that the cause of Truth must be promoted or sustained by such efforts only as are in the ordering of Truth, and not by the mere wisdom, will, and activity of the natural mind. The paper however became, in the course of time, a great receptacle of information in regard to what was passing in the Society, particularly in America. But in their zeal against Hicksism, and in many of their literary attempts to maintain what they thought to be Christian doctrine, it is certain (and easily perceived by the careful examiner of even the first volumes) that there was an edging toward the world's systems and modes of thought, and that the wholesome limits of the true doctrines of Friends were at times overstepped, and sentiments introduced (unconsciously doubtless on the part of the worthy editor, and perhaps of many or most of the readers), the natural tendency of which was to smooth the way for the reception of sentiments by no means con-

sistent with those entertained by the early members of the Society.*

For some time previous to the New York Yearly Meeting of 1828, proposals for making the appointment of elders temporary, similar to those made in the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, had been forwarded to that of New York, but after much difficulty had been rejected.† And in the spring of 1828, measures similar to those taken in Pennsylvania for increasing the number of representatives favorable to the party, were resorted to in several of the Quarterly Meetings. In Westbury Quarter (to which Elias Hicks belonged) double the usual number were appointed. Six of the most useful members, not of the party, though named, were rejected, and none were permitted on the appointment who were known to be unfavorable to his views. In Cornwall Quarterly Meeting, in like manner, though several were named, only one person opposed to his views was suffered to be appointed.

During the latter part of 1827, and the spring of 1828,

* The writer cannot exempt himself from some portion of this censure, having been in those early days, unaware of the danger and inconsistency of some of the modern views. The first editor, Robert Smith, deceased in 1851, and the paper has since that time become more obviously the organ of the "middle" or compromising system, and disposed to ignore the very existence of the "smaller bodies," which were endeavoring to stand, under much weakness and many discouragements, for the faith once delivered to the saints. There has, however, of latter time, been some evidence in its columns of a salutary alarm at the overwhelming progress of innovation.

† See Samuel Parsons's Testimony in Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 174.

many of those who in Pennsylvania and New Jersey had gone off in this schism, had been treated with by the Monthly Meetings in the regular order of the discipline, and being irreclaimable, had been disowned, as having separated themselves from fellowship among Friends. When the Yearly Meeting of New York assembled in the fifth month, 1828, it was found that a large number of these separatists from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, who had either been already disowned or were then under the care of their Monthly Meetings, had obtruded their presence into the Yearly Meeting. This circumstance precipitated the separation there, as it was well known to be contrary to the practice and order of the Society, to proceed with disciplinary business, while persons not in membership, or members under dealing as delinquents, were present.

Thomas Shillitoe rose soon after the clerk had read the opening minute, reminded Friends that through his certificates for religious service which had been minuted on their books the previous year, he had become during his stay among them a member of that body; and then mentioned the fact of there being a large number of disowned persons present, who had gone off in the schism, and whose presence was incompatible with the meeting's proceeding with its business. The intruders were urged to withdraw, but were strenuously encouraged to remain by E. Hicks and his party. Elias Hicks said he had himself attended their meeting in Green Street, Philadelphia, that its members were "the cream of the Society," and their meetings the only legitimate ones in that part; and he insisted on their right to sit in that meeting. He said further, that "if there were a dozen

or more Presbyterians present, the meeting ought to go on with its business." Many of his adherents advocated the same views, and much noise and confusion soon ensued. They ordered the clerk in a peremptory manner to go on with the business, and seemed disposed to compel him to do so. At this juncture, as there was no prospect of the intruders withdrawing, or of the meeting being allowed peaceably to proceed, surrounded by such a crowd of opponents of the principles and discipline of the Society, a proposal was made, that Friends who were concerned for the preservation of the Society in right order, should remove the sitting to the basement story of that building. This was freely united with by a large number of Friends, but violently opposed by the Hicks party. At length, seeing that the clerk was preparing to read a minute which he had written to that effect, they raised a great outcry, calling aloud, "Don't let him read it," "Pull him down." Others said, "He is no clerk of the meeting," "We have a clerk of our own," etc. Elias Hicks was requested to speak to them to suffer the clerk to read the minute, and it is thought that he then did say something to that effect; but the storm had risen to such a height, in hissing,* shouting, stamping, striking the floor and benches with canes and umbrellas, etc., that there seemed to be no possibility of calming the uproar so as to be heard. Before the clerk had read very far, Elias Hicks shared in the excitement, and said to him, "Thee is not the clerk of the meeting; thee shall not be allowed to read;" and turning to the audience, added, "Do not let him read." They promptly

* S. Parsons's Testimony, in Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 181.

obeyed his watchword, and called upon one John Barrow to act as clerk, saying it was the choice of the representatives; whereas this being the morning session, the representatives had not been directed to meet as yet, and if any of them did meet on the subject of nominating a clerk, it was only a party action, entirely unauthorized. The disturbance was now at its height. Forty or fifty of the party were, it is said, on their feet at one time.* Elias Hicks then called on their new clerk to come forward to the table; which he approached by climbing over the backs of the benches, and heads and shoulders of elderly Friends. When he thus arrived in front of the table, Elias put out his hand to assist him to gain access to it; but by some means he failed in his aim at it, and some of his party turned him into the clerk's seat heels foremost!† The regular clerk and assistant were at the same time violently pressed away from their place, to make room for him;‡ and attempts were made to wrest the minute from the clerk's hands. But notwithstanding all their uproar, he succeeded in reading it, while they hooted and hissed, and the noise sounded through the open windows to the street, like distant thunder.

Friends then went to continue the sitting in the basement story, but found it locked against them, and were threatened with legal proceedings if they attempted to open it. Under these circumstances, the Hall of Rutgers Medical College being offered to them, it was con-

* Joseph Hoag's Journal, Heston's edition, p. 291.

† Journal of T. Shillitoe, vol. ii, p. 311.

‡ Testimony of S. Parsons, Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 186.

cluded to adjourn to that building. It was a solemn procession through the streets of that busy and worldly city—many weeping as they walked silently along—and must have had a very striking effect upon the bystanders, though few were aware of the occasion of it. On reaching the hall, a time of solemn silence ensued, after which vocal praises ascended to the Shepherd of Israel, for His signal deliverance of His people. Among others, Daniel Haviland, who was then very old and blind, broke forth, says T. Shillitoe, in a melodious manner, acknowledging that his spirit was now set at liberty, and his lips unsealed, to speak of what he had seen for nearly forty years, and who it should be that would introduce such disorder and confusion into the Society. He mentioned the foresight also of the two English Friends respecting E. Hicks, thirty-five years previously (as related on page 102); and added that the scene they had just passed through was clearly unfolded to his view before he came to the city. "But," said he, "dear Friends, *there will yet something come to pass*, if my feelings have not deceived me, *that will more fully try our foundation!*"* And he exhorted Friends to get so deep in their spirits, that they might be able to stand. Would that this solemn admonition had been more deeply heeded than it appears to have been by subsequent events, which proved the truth of the prophecy and the great need of the warning.

Two Friends were now appointed to inform the Women's Meeting of what had occurred; but they were not permitted even to enter the yard. At their request, two

* Thomas Shillitoe's Journal, vol. ii, p. 313.

women Friends were called out from the meeting, who were under the necessity of going into the street to receive the message, in the midst of a crowd of people who thronged the gateway.*

The Women's Yearly Meeting, which had been similarly intruded upon, was afterwards separated, and Friends met the next day in the African Methodist Meeting-house. Thus the Yearly Meeting was sustained, and continued several days in session, issued an Address to the members in relation to these sorrowful occurrences, and appointed a committee to visit the subordinate meetings. Among other subjects which engaged attention, was a complaint against the unsound doctrines of Elias Hicks, sent to them by the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia.

The Monthly Meetings of Philadelphia for the Southern and Western Districts had, early in 1827, sent a complaint to Jericho Monthly Meeting on Long Island, respecting the unsound and pernicious utterances of Elias Hicks, especially in one of the meetings in the Pine Street house, during the winter of 1826–7. This complaint, when at length it was suffered to be read in Jericho Monthly Meeting, was treated as unworthy of further notice, and its allegations were denied as false, although fully borne out by the account taken on the occasion by the stenographer who printed so many of E. Hicks's discourses.† The Southern District Monthly Meeting, after waiting a reasonable time, represented the case to

* See Epistle and Testimony of New York Yearly Meeting, 1828, p. 10.

† See The Friend, Philadelphia, vol. ii, p. 152.

Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting; which then sent the complaint, by a delegation of three members, to Westbury Quarterly Meeting, of which Jericho Monthly Meeting formed a part. Elias Hicks's adherents having here also the control, refused to read it, and clamorously heaped abuse on Friends of Philadelphia. They, however, referred the paper to a committee for three months, and then the whole thing was set aside. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of 1828 then took up the case, and sent the complaint by a committee to the Yearly Meeting of New York; which receiving it for action after the separation had taken place there, was now free to place the matter in a proper train for disciplinary action. Accordingly it sent the complaint to Westbury Quarterly Meeting of Friends, with directions that the Monthly Meeting concerned should take the requisite measures in reference to it. The Monthly Meeting of Westbury and Jericho (formed by the union of two Monthly Meetings after the separation) promptly responded by sending a communication dated eighth month 21st, to Elias Hicks, who was then gone to Ohio, stating to him the very serious nature of the charges against him, and requiring him at once to return home. This communication was handed to him after his arrival at Mount Pleasant to attend Ohio Yearly Meeting. He evinced great agitation.

Elias had been travelling about in various sections of Ohio Yearly Meeting previous to its convening, preparing his partisans for the event. I should be glad to draw the veil of silence over the disgraceful scenes that were the result of his harangues, and of those of his prominent coadjutors; but the truth must be told.

Thomas Shillitoe had crossed his path at various places within a few weeks of the Yearly Meeting, in the western parts of Pennsylvania, and the eastern border of Ohio, and arduous service had devolved upon him, in the necessity of exposing the unsoundness of Elias's doctrines to the people, at such times as they happened to meet at the same place.

The Select Yearly Meeting of Ohio assembled at Mount Pleasant, on seventh-day, the 6th of ninth month, as usual. Elias Hicks and some of his followers attempted to attend it, but as they were palpably engaged in efforts to extend in Ohio the separation which had already taken place from the Society to the eastward, they were informed at the gate that they would not be allowed to enter the house. On this, to the number of twenty-two (eight or ten of whom were from other Yearly Meetings), including, it has been thought, only one *minister* belonging to Ohio Yearly Meeting, they held their meeting near the gate, then adjourned to a building not far off, and finished their pretended "Select Yearly Meeting" at Israel French's house.

On first-day, the 7th, the meetings for worship were much crowded, and greatly disturbed by these people. A large concourse assembled at the Mount Pleasant house in the morning, to whom Elias Hicks preached as usual at considerable length; but his position as a schismatic, and the unsoundness of his doctrines, were clearly exposed by Elisha Bates, who was then a minister in unity with Friends; and Elias could make no adequate reply, but said, that was not the place for entering into *discussion;* which indeed was true. He made his home at the house of Israel French, and several of his partisans, in-

cluding Amos Peisley, Elisha Dawson, and Halliday Jackson, put up at the same house.* It is supposed, from various circumstances, that the plan for seizing the meeting-house on second-day, was considered and agreed on among them in that house, as it had been previously considered by many of them in a certain school-house† on seventh-day afternoon previous. However that may have been, Elias Hicks evidently deemed it most prudent for himself to stay away from the opening sitting on second-day. In his "Journal," he gives no reason for staying away, but touches the subject very lightly, saying: "Not being present at this sitting, I was informed that great confusion and disorder took place." Halliday Jackson afterwards gave as a reason for the absence of his friend, that he was "engaged in writing to his friends at home," in regard to some "novel communications from Long Island." This was a singular excuse to give for the absence of one who had come between four and five hundred miles with a certificate to attend Ohio Yearly Meeting. But it appears that he was actually engaged that day (as he deemed it best to stay away from the meeting), in writing an angry reply to the letter of his once dear friend Gideon Seaman, conveying to him the requisition of Westbury and Jericho Monthly Meeting for his return home forthwith. He began his reply with the words, "My poor deluded friend, Gideon Seaman," and went on to declare in vague terms that the charges against him were "founded altogether in falsehood;" but said nothing to clear himself from the false doctrines which were not only in those charges, but also

* The Friend, vol. i, p. 407. † Ibid., p. 414.

in the report of his sermon taken down in short hand, which he here acknowledged to have been "taken *verbatim* as delivered." Charging his accusers with having left their first love, and "turned away to fables and false reports," he applied to them the language partly addressed by Christ Jesus to Saul: "Friends, friends, why persecute ye me? It is hard for you to kick against the pricks,"—and declared, with a remarkable want of attention to accuracy of statement, that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ("orthodox") was "but the gleanings of Society, being little more than a sixth part of the whole body of friends that constitute that Yearly Meeting." This was a singular estimate, when it was generally admitted that in that Yearly Meeting the numbers were *nearly* equally divided—a *small* preponderance only being attached to the Hicksites. He asked his accusers, "how they could feel themselves, in their folly, so consequential as to send an order for" him "to return immediately home," etc., and concluded by saying that if he were to comply with their order, he should be acknowledging the reign of Antichrist. Such was his temper, while his partisans were following out their newly invented declaration, "that there was no law against *the press*,"—*i. e., bodily pressure!*

At 8 o'clock on second-day morning, the Committee on Indian Concerns met as usual in the Yearly Meeting-house for the transaction of their business; but had not proceeded much more than an hour, when it was announced to them that the crowd outside was so great and so anxious to enter, that the doors would have to be opened for the Yearly Meeting. The Friends appointed by the several Quarterly Meetings to preserve

order about the entrances to the Yearly Meeting-house, had also met about 8 o'clock, and in view of the extraordinary state of things, and the imminent danger of violence on the part of the seceders, they had agreed together that all peaceable means should be resorted to, to induce them to refrain from intruding upon the meeting, but in no case to repel force by force. The weather was extremely wet, and long before 10 o'clock the doors were opened, and the crowd began to rush into the house.

There were among them a large number of separatists, and also various persons of the vicinity, attracted probably by curiosity or an idle desire for excitement. The separatists at once evinced their determination to enter the house, either peaceably or forcibly, and the doorkeepers soon found it useless to attempt to keep out even those among them who had been disowned. Many rushed violently through the doors in solid masses, enveloping in their midst those whom they knew to be the most obnoxious, and having gained an entrance for these, either remained inside to pull in those whom their comrades outside were pushing through the committee of doorkeepers, or went out to form new solid masses round other disowned persons, and perform their feats over again. After the house was nearly filled up, and somewhat of a pause took place, Thomas Shillitoe was engaged in supplication; but the solemnity ensuing was interrupted by one of the most formidable of these solid masses of wild young men rushing into the house,* having Amos Peisley and Elisha Dawson in their midst. They burst through the crowd of Friends, exclaiming to

* The Friend, vol. i, p. 391.

one another, "Move on, Friends; move on, Friends!" and seemed determined to take possession of the house. Soon Israel French rose and said, that "it devolved on him" to declare that the present clerk had disqualified himself for acting, and another one ought to be appointed; and immediately some one else called out, "I nominate David Hilles." This was responded to by shouts of approbation. The clerk meantime was engaged in calling the names of the representatives, and reading their credentials from the several Quarterly Meetings. David Hilles being loudly urged by his party, strove to make his way to the table through the dense crowd of Friends, but found it no easy matter, as they were particularly closely packed about the galleries where the table was situated, and were by no means disposed needlessly to make room for a posse of intruders. His party therefore now made a desperate rush toward the galleries, evincing, by the angry expression of their countenances, and vehement gestures, their determination to effect their object. One of them getting on some eminence, precipitated himself headlong upon the body of Friends, in order to throw them into confusion and make them give way. In his first attempt he rolled over, and fell prostrate among them, but trying it again, with assistance, he pushed himself over the rail into the gallery among the elderly Friends. Here putting his feet against the railing of the gallery, to obtain purchase in pulling a comrade also up, some of the woodwork gave way, which increased the noise and alarm.

Friends attempted to remonstrate against such riotous proceedings, and even some of their own party endeavored to allay the tumult. But the others cried out, "Move

on, move on!" and remonstrance and rebuke were alike unheeded. One man mounted the large stove, and urged them on, shouting that they were going to restore the God of love to the galleries! Their new clerk had not yet succeeded in reaching the table. Suddenly a cry was raised, that the youth's gallery, or the sounding-board over the ministers' gallery, was breaking down, and the house falling; and a crash was now heard upstairs, which seemed to give probability to the alarm. It arose, however, from some one there breaking a piece of wood, probably with the intent of raising a panic. Many had no means of knowing how false was the alarm, but jumped or tumbled down from the youth's galleries; others rushed impetuously down the stairs and out at the doors; and many were seriously crushed and hurt in the press. The sudden rush loosened some plaster from the ceiling,* and this falling increased the alarm. The glass of several windows was broken away, and one window sash kicked and broken to pieces. The leading rioters meanwhile kept what they had gained, without being involved in the alarm, as if they knew all about it, and held themselves in readiness to seize any advantage offered by it. But Friends generally about the table remained also at their posts.

But at length the party gained their point. While the clerk was endeavoring to write down the names of the chief rioters, one of them threw open a door behind the table; others then made a push at the table itself, to move it from its place, and to force those sitting behind it through the open door. But this was not easily ef-

* Thomas Shillitoe's Journal, vol. ii, p. 345.

fected. Then one of them seizing a leg of the table, another a part of the top, a third the drawer, and so on, they pulled the table to pieces; and rushed so furiously on Jonathan Taylor, the clerk, who was a delicate man and in slender health, that he was in danger of being "pressed" to death. Some one outside at this juncture seeing his perilous situation, laid hold of him and rescued him through the open doorway. Having thus taken possession of the table literally by storm, they raised a hurrah! Their newly nominated clerk was talking and tittering at the elbow of the seat near where the table had been. Several plain-looking men seemed to be taking the lead, and one of them cried out that it would soon be time to *clear the house* for their new clerk. Some one handed to the latter the drawer of the shattered table, to serve as a desk, and he soon read something by way of a minute under the new order of things. Friends seeing that the control of the meeting was thus usurped by a mob, it was now proposed to adjourn to the next day, and this being approved, they quietly withdrew from the house. The Hicks party proceeded in holding what they called Ohio Yearly Meeting.

Even the Women's Meeting did not escape being invaded by some of the mob. A company of them rushed violently into their apartment, and threw open one of the outer doors, as if they wished either to induce other rude men to enter, or to suggest to some of the female friends to make their escape. The alarm respecting the house falling was quickly communicated to them, and a young man ran in among them, jumped into one of the windows, and began to kick it to pieces with all his

force.* They adjourned in accordance with the action of the Men's Meeting.

At ten o'clock the next morning, the Yearly Meeting reassembled according to adjournment, but were not allowed to occupy the house. Elias Hicks and his party had collected an hour before that. After ineffectually demanding the use of the house to hold the Yearly Meeting, and being tauntingly answered that the Yearly Meeting was now sitting and did not wish to be disturbed, Friends collected for a time in the yard, and adjourned to the Short Creek Meeting-house, not far distant, where the rest of the sittings of the Yearly Meeting were held.

It was supposed by Friends of that meeting, that not more than one-third of the members originally present to attend the Yearly Meeting consorted with Elias Hicks and his party; and their outrageous conduct evinced how little they regarded their own favorite dogma of "the right of the majority to rule," except when it suited their own purposes.

The Yearly Meeting of Indiana was peaceably held, as usual, at White Water, near Richmond, in that State, commencing on the 6th of the tenth month; the Hicksites in that section having already seceded, and, much to their credit, held their Yearly Meeting separately, about a week previous, at Waynesville, in Ohio; thus avoiding such disgraceful scenes as had taken place at Mount Pleasant. Elias Hicks was there also, and it is probable that but for his presence, his party would

* See "The Friend," Philadelphia, vol. i, p. 392.

scarcely have had strength to take the step they did in professing to hold Indiana Yearly Meeting.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting was the only remaining body of that character, in which the Hicks party effected a separation. It convened in the city of Baltimore on the 27th of tenth month, 1828. Many individuals who had been disowned were suffered to attend it, and the credentials of some of them from the separate meetings were read. The Yearly Meeting of 1827 had already shown its preference for the schismatics, by reading and answering an Epistle from the separate meeting in Green Street, Philadelphia, while it sent also a cold and almost rebuking reply to one sent to it by the Yearly Meeting of Friends of that year. But on this occasion, in 1828, it received and read Epistles not only from the regular Yearly Meetings of Friends, but also from the Hicks Meetings of Philadelphia, New York, and Indiana, and accepted and answered these, while they left the others unnoticed. In narrating the subsequent proceedings, as they seem to have an important bearing on other cases somewhat similar, and especially as they were stated and remarked upon soon after, in a very lucid manner, in the periodical paper published in Philadelphia, entitled "The Friend," I prefer to quote certain portions of the statements made in that paper, rather than to give my own. To copy the whole account and remarks, would inconveniently and uselessly extend these pages; but we will take such portions as are required to give a clear view of the subject as treated in that periodical.*

"Epistles were produced from meetings of the sece-

* "The Friend," Philadelphia, vol. ii, p. 37.

"ders, styled Yearly Meetings, which were read and "minuted, while little other notice was taken of those "from the ancient and regularly established Yearly Meet- "ings, except to censure their contents in harsh terms. "It was also proposed that the assembly should then "distinctly declare whether it would recognize and unite "with the meetings of those who have separated them- "selves from the society, or continue its connection and "fellowship with the long-established Yearly Meetings "of Friends. The former proposition was warmly sup- "ported by the advocates of the new doctrines, and a "minute was made recognizing such a conclusion.* It "is evident that this measure completely *identified* all "those who promoted it, not only with the different "bodies of *separatists* scattered over this country, and "with the erroneous notions which they hold on impor- "tant points of Christian faith, but also severed them "from communion with the ancient Society. By this "act, therefore, the assembly ceased to be the Yearly "Meeting of *Friends* of Baltimore, and became a Yearly "Meeting of the newly established sect. Those indi- "viduals who conscientiously dissented from the doc- "trines held by the separatists, and who felt no wish to "become a part of their Society, had no alternative left "but to meet apart from the others, and endeavor to "continue their connection with their brethren in other "Yearly Meetings, as the Yearly Meeting of Friends in "Baltimore, etc."

* A committee was also appointed to essay replies to the three bodies of separatists, of Philadelphia, New York, and Indiana. See "The Friend," vol. ii, p. 53.

Page 53, "It will probably be said, that comparatively a *few only* of the members of Baltimore Yearly "Meeting, who joined themselves to the new sect, *actually hold* the unsound principles of Elias Hicks. We "sincerely hope this is the fact; but it does not change "the state of the case. Whether they themselves hold "the principles or not, if they unite in a Society capacity with those who do hold and openly avow them, "they lend their influence in support of those principles, "and sanction them by the language of conduct and example. They show their approbation of them by the "strongest evidence which can be given, viz., social "unity and church fellowship."

Page 54, "The Society, the ministers, and the doctrines, are all identified and associated with each other; "and every member who evinces his unity with the sect, "is accountable for the principles which are thus promulgated, as completely as are the members of any "other religious communion for the doctrines held by "it."

Again, page 54, "It matters not how large the number may be who violate the compact, break down the "established constitution, and disregard the terms on "which a right of membership in the Society of Friends "can only be held. If it be nine-tenths, nineteen-twentieths, or ninety-nine-hundredths, the principle "remains the same. Membership can only be enjoyed "so long as the prescribed terms of it are complied with: "the moment an individual violates those conditions, he "voluntarily forfeits his right,* and if the whole num-

* These expressions seem to need some qualification. A deliberate and persistent violation of the constitution of the Society

"ber of persons constituting a meeting act thus, they as "fully and completely cease to be members of the Society "as any one of them would if regularly disowned by the "rest. Numbers have no modifying influence upon the "terms and principles of the Association. . . . . It is "not the same Society it was before, if the *fundamental* "*principles* of its union are altered."

Page 61, "The statements we have already made, "show in the clearest manner that in order to retain "their connection with the Society, and to support its "doctrines and discipline, Friends of Baltimore Yearly "Meeting had no alternative left but to meet apart from "those who had seceded from its communion, and at- "tached themselves to the new Society of Hicksites. Ac- "cordingly, near the close of the sitting on fourth-day "afternoon, notice was given to such persons as were "dissatisfied with the irregular proceedings of the sepa- "ratists, to meet at nine o'clock on the following morning, "at the McKendrean school-house, for the purpose of "holding Baltimore Yearly Meeting of *Friends*, in con- "nection with the ancient and regularly instituted Yearly "Meetings of our religious Society. Two Friends went "to communicate this information to the women's meet-

does of itself deprive the offender of his *right* of membership, or rightful claim to membership; though his actual membership in fact continues to some extent, until, after gospel order has been duly and ineffectually exercised by the church, or assembly of the faithful, this membership is declared to be forfeited. The true fellowship having been broken, the technical or merely outward membership is as it were held in suspense *ad interim*, for his recovery. Yet, as R. Barclay says, *he casts himself out*, by his transgression; which in due time, if persisted in, the church has to declare.

"ing; but when they attempted to enter, they were "denied admittance by two of the Hicksites, who had "anticipated the movement, and placed themselves at "the doors to guard them. They, however, obtained "admission by a side-door, which had escaped the vigi- "lance of the sentinels, and informed the assembly of "the proposed meeting.

"The number of Friends who convened on fifth-day "was about one hundred and fifty, of whom sixty-six "were men, and eighty-four women." . . . "It is true "the company was small; yet we can thankfully ac- "knowledge, that He who has promised to be with the "two or three that are met in His name, owned the "meeting by His sacred presence, the evidence of which "more than compensated for the sacrifice that many had "made, and the derision they met with, in thus openly "acknowledging their attachment to His name and "cause. The meeting closed on seventh-day evening, "and Friends parted from each other under a grateful "and humbling sense of the unmerited favor they had "been permitted to enjoy." . . .

"There can be *but one Society of Friends;* and that "one Society must adhere to those doctrines which are "the basis of the compact on which the association was "originally formed. Each Yearly Meeting has its pe- "culiar and exclusive rights, relating to its own govern- "ment and internal regulations; and these it holds in- "dependently of all other Yearly Meetings; provided "always, that they do not extend to the rejection of any "acknowledged doctrine or testimony. But if either of "the Yearly Meetings, or any number of them, alter "the principles which form the outward bond of union

"in the Society, forsake the ancient and established "organization, and join a new association, holding dif- "ferent principles, they cease to be a constituent part of "the Society of Friends."

Page 39, "By uniting that meeting to the separat- "ists, in New York, Philadelphia, Ohio, and Indiana, "they countenanced and sanctioned not only the violent "and unchristian conduct of which the party in some of "those places had been guilty, but they actually avowed "*unity* with the *pernicious doctrines* which they are "*known to hold;* and every member of Baltimore Yearly "Meeting, who continued to meet with the party after "they had thus fully identified themselves with the new "sect, was lending his influence and according his assent "to those practices and doctrines."*

The reader will please to bear in mind that the above arguments and conclusions of *The Friend,* unanswerably clear as they are, are equally applicable to cases which we may meet with in the sequel of this history. It may be proper to add, that although, in this separation from Baltimore Yearly Meeting, the Hicksites had all the technical advantages of numbers, organization, and apparent regularity of proceedings as to the routine and order of business, yet *the one fundamental point,* the *maintenance of sound doctrine against attempted innovations,* was a far counterbalancing one in the view of Friends; and this *small body* of that epoch was received, without any question as to numbers or technicalities,

* See also in the same article, at page 69 of the same volume of "The Friend," a lucid development of the fallacy of the Hicksites' denial of the charge of not owning the divinity of Christ, and how they attempt to distinguish between Jesus and "the Christ."

and immediately owned in the brotherhood of the Society, by every sound Yearly Meeting.

It remains now, in bringing towards a conclusion our account of this great schism in the Society, to relate the facts of the disownment of Elias Hicks.

We have seen that he disregarded the requisition of the Monthly Meeting of Westbury and Jericho,* sent to him in Ohio, for his immediate return home to answer the charges which had been brought against him. We have seen, too, that he wrote an angry reply to his old and faithful friend Gideon Seaman's earnest and brotherly expostulation with him.

He returned from his western journey in the twelfth month, and as he persisted in disregarding the advice of Friends, and continued to impose himself on the community as an acknowledged minister in the Society, it became incumbent on the meeting to which he was amenable as a member (the one he was now consorted with being altogether irregular and schismatic, and established for the support and promotion of his innovations), to take measures for the clearing of truth from so great a reproach as his preaching had brought on the Society. He was accordingly waited on in the regular order of the discipline, by the overseers of Westbury and Jericho Monthly Meeting; and as no satisfaction was received by them, his case was reported to the Preparative Meeting, and thence transmitted, for further dealing, to the Monthly Meeting. Here a committee

* The two Monthly Meetings having been united into one, after the separation of the Hicksian party, E. Hicks's membership of course was now in the joint meeting.

was appointed, as usual, to treat with him; but he pertinaciously rejected the care and labors of Friends,* and persisted in his erroneous opinions. There was therefore no way left for the meeting but to proceed to issue a Testimony of disownment against him, and thus clear the Society from all responsibility for his sentiments and course. The Testimony is an important historic document, taking a view of the whole case. It is therefore here transcribed.

"Testimony of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of "Westbury and Jericho, against Elias Hicks and his "doctrines.

"Elias Hicks has been, for many years, in the station of "a minister in our religious Society, and formerly well ap- "proved amongst us; in which character he has travelled "extensively, and obtained great influence with the mem- "bers of the Society; but for want of abiding in a state of "humble watchfulness, in which, by the power of divine "grace, he would have been preserved in the truth, he has "become exalted in his mind, and giving way to a dis- "position of reasoning, has indulged in speculative opin- "ions, asserting that we must always take things rationally; "and that we are not bound to believe anything we do not "understand. Thus declining to be restricted within the "limits of the Christian faith, he has refused to yield his "assent to religious truths which he cannot comprehend; "and has imbibed and adopted opinions at variance with "some of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian relig- "ion, always believed in and maintained by the Society of "Friends; denied the existence or influence of an evil "spirit on the mind of man, distinct from his natural pro-

* See "The Friend," vol. ii, p. 318.

"pensities; and has, in this state, entertained doubts of "many of the important truths declared in the Holy Scrip- "tures; especially as relates to the fall of man, and his re- "demption by Christ; and, in consequence, to call in ques- "tion the divine authority of a great portion of the sacred "writings, and even the authenticity of some parts thereof.

"He has extensively promulgated his views in conversa- "tion, in writing, and in his public communications, en- "deavoring to destroy a belief in the miraculous concep- "tion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; undervaluing "the miracles wrought by Him; and asserting that He was "but a man, as liable to fall into sin, and lose his condi- "tion, as the rest of mankind; that He was on a level, and "in a state of equality with them; an Israelite endued "with a measure of divine grace, in common with the chil- "dren of Abraham, and that the principal end of His com- "ing was limited to the Jews.

"And as he has denied the divinity of our Lord and "Saviour Jesus Christ, he has totally rejected a belief in "His holy offices, His propitiatory offering for the redemp- "tion of mankind; and has denied His resurrection and "ascension into heaven, asserting that His body returned "to the earth, where it will rest with our bodies to all eter- "nity, and moulder into its mother dust. He has also denied "His mediation and intercession with the Father, as plainly "set forth in Holy Writ.

"Under the specious and captivating pretence of increas- "ed spirituality, and advancement in light and knowledge "beyond our primitive Friends, and even beyond the apostles "of our Lord, he has insinuated his unsound opinions into "the minds of many of the members of our Society, partic- "ularly within the limits of our own Yearly Meeting, and "that of Philadelphia; and having gradually prepared "them to receive his views, he has induced great numbers

"to embrace them; and has at length become the leader of "a sect, distinguished by his name, yet unjustly assuming "the character of Friends; which first separated from the "Yearly Meeting of Friends in Philadelphia, in the fourth "month, 1827, on the ground of difference in doctrine, as "they state in their printed Address. They held a sepa- "rate meeting in that month, and in the sixth and tenth "months following, and also in the fourth month, 1828, "which last meeting Elias Hicks attended, gave it his coun- "tenance, and received a minute of its unity with him and "his services.

"In the Yearly Meeting of Friends in New York in the "fifth month following, he encouraged and supported a "large number of those separatists in their intrusion into "said meeting; many of whom had been regularly disown- "ed from the Society; yet he manifested his full unity with "them, and with their meetings; and also took an active "part with his followers in their disorderly and tumultuous "proceedings; and continued in connection with those of "similar views, in holding a separate meeting, which they "called a Yearly Meeting. Since that time he has travelled "into Ohio, Indiana, and elsewhere, encouraging his follow- "ers in holding meetings in different parts, in opposition to "the order of our Society.

"His erroneous opinions published to the world under his "own signature, and also in his printed sermons, which he "has acknowledged to be generally correct, are recited and "testified against, in the Epistle and Testimony of our last "Yearly Meeting held in New York, and in the declara- "tions and testimonies of the Yearly Meetings of Friends "in Philadelphia, Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, and In- "diana; who are also supported therein by the testimony "of the Yearly Meeting of Rhode Island, and the minutes "of the Yearly Meeting of London; hence it is evident,

"that Friends of all these Yearly Meetings remain united "together in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

"For a number of years past, many of his friends have "been deeply exercised on his account; and have been con- "cerned from time to time tenderly to admonish and warn "him; but he being in a confident state of mind, their ad- "monitions have not had the desired effect; and the support "which he received from many of his adherents, prevented "the timely exercise of the discipline in his case, especially "in the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of which he was "a member; but the separation taking place at our last "Yearly Meeting, and this Monthly Meeting being now in "a situation to extend the necessary care therein, the same "has been duly attended to, according to the order of our "Society, to convince him of his errors; which having been "in like manner rejected by him, it becomes our incumbent "duty, for the clearing of Truth and our religious Society "from the imputation of his unsound opinions, and the re- "proach thereby brought upon it, to testify and declare, "that they are not, nor ever have been, the doctrines of the "Society of Friends; and as we can have no unity with "them, nor fellowship with him therein, we do hereby dis- "own him, the said *Elias Hicks*, from being a member of "the religious Society of Friends: desiring, nevertheless, "that through the convictions produced by the operation of "the Holy Spirit, he may be brought to a sense of his errors; "and through sincere repentance, may obtain that salvation "which is freely offered through our Lord and Saviour "Jesus Christ.

"Signed on behalf and by direction of the Monthly "Meeting of Friends of Westbury and Jericho, held at "Westbury the 29th of the fourth month, 1829.

"By VALENTINE WILLETS,
"Clerk."

After all this, viz., on the 16th of eleventh month, 1829, Elias Hicks wrote (or at least signed) a Letter to one of his adherents (Hugh Judge), giving answers to Six Queries respecting his doctrines; which queries had been artfully drawn up, and the answers no less carefully contrived, so as, apparently, to endeavor to cover up, for those of his disciples more or less weak in their confidence in him, his own gross errors, and to make people believe that he had never said certain things which the world well knew that he had often repeated, and the printed statements of which utterances he had acknowledged to be correct.* As there was then a bill already filed for a suit between the Hicksian party and Friends in the Court of Chancery of New Jersey, it seems probable that one purpose may have been to have it used to advantage in that suit. George Wood, counsel for Friends, in pleading on the appeal, said, in reference to it, "a more artful piece of invention was never exhibited in a court of justice. It was manufactured after this controversy had arisen."† However this may have been, and however cautiously it was worded, either by him or for him, it is altogether inadequate to cancel his monstrous errors, uttered year after year, in various ways, before the public and in private.

The first query was in regard to the miraculous conception of Christ. To which he replied, that from his youth up he had "had as full a belief" in it, "as it was possible for the history to give belief," and that he

* See page 106.

† See "Foster's Report," vol. ii, p. 433; and "Full Report of the Pleadings," etc.; Philadelphia, 1834, p. 430.

"never thought or said that he believed Joseph was his father;" whereas he had distinctly said to W. Jackson, that there was "as much," and to T. Willis, that there was "considerable more Scripture testimony" (that is, of course, *history*) against it than for it, and had often in public uttered his doubts on that subject!

The second query, on the Divinity of Christ, he answered ambiguously and insidiously, evidently with a mental reservation bearing on the construction of his words.*

The third query was on the Holy Scriptures; of which, in his answer, he professed "high esteem from his youth," and to have "confirmed his doctrine abundantly from their testimony," and "endeavored to place them in their true place and station." But even here there was a catch, for he went on to declare that "when the Scriptures have directed and pointed us to this light within, or spirit of truth, *there they must stop—it is their ultimatum—the top-stone of what they can do.*" Of course the meaning of this is, that they are of no further use! not even for comfort, or for correction and instruction in righteousness!

The fourth query was in regard to a state of rewards and punishments; which he answered as if he had never denied it.

The fifth query was respecting "our coming up to a level with the man Christ Jesus;" desiring him to explain his own words in regard to it; which he does very imperfectly, the reply being exceedingly misty and ambiguous, followed by a few texts of Scripture, which by

* See his views on this subject on page 111.

no means throw any light on the alleged "level;" but, by his application of them, show his desire to bring Christ down to the "level" of a good man.

The sixth query, respecting the "relation of the body of Jesus to the Saviour of men," and regarding the crucifixion of that body as an atonement for our sins, he answered evidently with great care, quoting Isaac Penington and George Whitehead, without naming them. In quoting from Isaac Penington, it is remarkable that he begins immediately *after* a very full, and clear, and emphatic acknowledgment, by that author, of the efficacy of that sacrifice for sin; which would have been very much to his purpose if he had been really sound on this point. But he leaves it all out, giving what may fairly be called a garbled quotation, which does not *fully* express what Isaac Penington had in view.* If Elias Hicks's words in this answer are taken strictly as a reply to the question of the atonement, they will be found to be very ambiguous and unsatisfactory.

He winds up with a reference to his printed sermons, "as taken down by Gould the stenographer;" mentioning them as containing answers to "all objections in regard to his belief and doctrine;" hereby indorsing the sentiments to be found in those sermons, if plain English words have any unmistakable meaning. The baneful seed had been sown, and had germinated abundantly, and it was not in his power, by such a document

* See I. Penington's Works, 4to, vol. ii, p. 7; or Amer. edit., vol. iii, p. 31. The unfairness of this partial and fallacious quotation may be clearly perceived by a reference to the passages immediately preceding it in the original.

as this, even if so disposed, to avert the consequences of the growth of that seed.

"The last act in the life" of Elias Hicks, say the editors of his "Journal," was the writing of another letter to Hugh Judge. This letter had many declarations respecting "the inward law and light," which might have been well, if this inward law and light had been acknowledged, in any one of the frequent allusions to it, as being the purchase of Christ's death, who tasted death for every man. But no such thing, nor any approach to a recognition of Christ Jesus as the author of our salvation, or of our redemption having anything to do with what he did and suffered for us in the prepared body, is to be found in this long letter. He frequently speaks in it of Jesus, but never calls him the Lord Jesus, or our Saviour. In the early part of it—after saying that "the blessed Jesus, our holy and perfect pattern and example . . . assured his disciples, that by walking in the same pathway of self-denial and the cross, which he trod to blessedness, they might also overcome the world; as nothing has ever enabled any rational being, in any age of the world, to overcome the spirit of the world, which lieth in wickedness, but the cross of Christ"—he gives his definition of the cross of Christ, as follows: "Some may query, what is the cross of Christ? To these I answer, it is the perfect law of God written on the tablet of the heart, and in the heart of every rational creature, in such indelible characters, that all the power of mortals cannot erase or obliterate. Neither is there any power or means given or dispensed to the children of men, but this inward law and light,

by which the true and saving knowledge of God can be obtained."*

This letter was written on the 14th of the second month, 1830, and the "Memorial" of his friends respecting him states, that after writing it he returned to the room occupied by the family, "apparently just attacked by a paralytic affection, which nearly deprived him of the use of his right side, and of the power of speech. Being assisted to a chair near the fire, he manifested by signs that the letter which he had just finished, and which had been dropped by the way, should be taken care of." After this, he "continued gradually to decline, until the evening of the 27th, when he quietly passed" away.†

The various Yearly Meetings in America promptly issued declarations against this secession, showing the antichristian ground of it, and the inconsistent and disorderly measures by which its accomplishment was attended. In the summer of 1829, a *joint* Committee, appointed by each of these Yearly Meetings, assembled in Philadelphia, and prepared an extensive document, bearing the character of a "*united* testimony to those great truths which the Society of Friends has ever most surely believed." This document, being subsequently presented to the respective Yearly Meetings, was adopted by each of them, and published in 1830, as "The Testimony of the Society of Friends on the Continent of America." It stated briefly the fact of the schism having taken place within the limits of the Yearly Meetings of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Ohio, and Indiana;

* Journal of E. Hicks, Appendix, p. 439. † Ib., p. 450.

adding, however, "It is cause of thankfulness that the Yearly Meetings of Friends in all these places have been sustained, and hold religious fellowship with one another, and with the ancient Yearly Meetings of New England, Virginia, North Carolina, London, and Dublin, in which there is no schism."

The bulk of the document consisted of declarations on various points of doctrine involved in this unhappy schism, chiefly quoted from Robert Barclay, George Fox, and other standard authors. London Yearly Meeting likewise issued, in 1829, a brief testimony against the Hicks schism, citing various Scripture doctrines appropriate to the occasion. Towards the close, in allusion to these doctrines, it declares: "We do not acknowledge "as in fellowship with us, as a Christian community, "any body of religious professors which does not accept "them, or which openly receives and accredits as minis- "ters, those who attempt to invalidate any of these doc- "trines, which we esteem as essential parts of the Chris- "tian religion."

Would that London Yearly Meeting had been equally careful, a few years afterwards, to disavow fellowship with those "ministers" who did not hesitate to "attempt to invalidate" other doctrines equally "essential" to the Christian religion.

CHAPTER V.

THE SUITS AT LAW, CONSEQUENT ON THE HICKSIAN SECESSION.

THERE were some results of the Hicksian controversy, which I would gladly pass by in silence, were it not that their notoriety and importance in regard to a development of facts, have made them a necessary feature of the history of these times.

It is a grievous and sorrowful thing, for religious disputes to be dragged into the arena of courts of law. When we consider the scope and weight of that doctrine, that "the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God," and the fact that the great majority of men of the law are by no means adequately led and limited by the guidance of that Holy Spirit, which alone gives true discernment in spiritual things, how can we expect that (unless overruled by the special providence of the Most High), they will be able to decide such matters as are connected with the mysteries of the Heavenly Kingdom, according to divine wisdom or immutable truth? Might we not as reasonably look for a satisfactory result, in sending an abstruse problem of metaphysics to a band of musicians to decide, or a question of the proper treatment of an occult disease which had baffled the science

of the College of Physicians, to be determined by the wisdom of a naval court martial?

But so it was, that in the warmth of controversial antagonism, and the anxiety of trustees to legalize their own position to advantage of the parties for whom they acted, several cases occurred in which the disputes in regard to property, naturally arising from this schism, found their way into the courts, to the great regret of many Friends, who looked back upon them in cooler times with sorrow, lamenting the increase of alienated feeling thus occasioned, with but little if any result of good.

The first case of appeal to the law after the separation, occurred in Philadelphia, in the summer of 1828, and was of a very painful nature. Repeated instances had occurred, of the Hicksites of Green Street Meeting refusing to accept orders for the interment of their deceased members from the committee of the Northern District Monthly Meeting having charge of the Western Burial-ground. Instead thereof they broke the lock of the gate and made forcible entry. They alleged that they had their own committee—that the ground belonged in part to Green Street Monthly Meeting, which in their view still existed—and that the orders which were offered to them by those who had possession on behalf of the four other Monthly Meetings of the city, did not recognize their deceased as *members*.

No resistance was made to their thus breaking the lock, time after time; but becoming tired of this mode of entrance, they resolved to have a gate of their own; and doubtless it would have been better if they had been quietly permitted to proceed, after a protest against

their trespass. On the 31st of the fifth month, three members of the Green Street Meeting, with a few laborers, broke down a part of the high brick wall on the western side of the burial-ground, and prepared to put up a large gate, and also erected a small wooden building in the yard. Being asked, by whose authority they were acting, one of them replied, "The best in the world; that of the rightful owners." They were desired to desist, but proceeded in their work. The mayor of the city being informed of what was going on, issued warrants for the arrest of the parties, for having committed a breach of the public peace. On the hearing, he required each of them to give their own personal recognizance in the sum of five hundred dollars, to keep the peace until the next mayor's court. As they refused to do this, they were committed to prison; but by writ of *habeas corpus*, were soon afterwards brought before Judge King, of the County Court, whose political aspirations were supposed to be fostered by a party opposed to that of the mayor, and courting the favor of the Hicksites for the sake of their votes. Several days were occupied in the hearing of testimony. On the 21st of sixth month, the judge, in a long and labored adjudication of the case,* assuming the continued *de facto* existence of Green Street Monthly Meeting, notwithstanding its having been laid down by the Quarterly Meeting, with erroneous explanations of what constitutes a forcible entry or breach of the peace, and much argument intended to show that important "assumptions" on the part of the prosecutors had not been proved, and that it

* See "The Friend," Philadelphia, vol. i, pp. 292, 293, 295.

was not for him, but for a court and jury, or the Supreme Court of the State, to pronounce on the guilt or otherwise of the prisoners, released them from any further security to keep the peace (alleging that there was no proof of their having broken it), and discharged them from custody. The case (I think) was afterwards carried to the Supreme Court, but abandoned without coming to trial.

During the autumn of the same year, 1828, complaint was made against David Hilles and Israel James (the former the Clerk of the Hicksites), for disturbing Ohio Yearly Meeting. The trial commenced on the 15th of the tenth month, and after an investigation during ten days, on the 25th Judge Hallock delivered his opinion, and the accused were sentenced to a fine of five dollars each.* In the similar case of J. Pierce and others, indicted for producing a riot on the same occasion, the accused were by the jury found guilty before the court at Steubenville, after several days consumed in examining witnesses, and sentenced by Judge Sutherland to a merely nominal penalty—Friends having through their counsel intimated their wish only for the protection afforded by the law, and recommended the defendants to the clemency of the Court. The sentence accordingly was imprisonment for thirty minutes, and a fine of six cents each, with costs of the prosecution.† Notwithstanding the lenity of the

* See "The Friend," Philadelphia, vol. ii, p. 219. Taken from Bates's Miscellaneous Repository.

† See "The Friend," vol. ii, p. 294, etc. The account of the trial published by M. T. C. Gould is evidently very defective and fallacious. A full account may be seen in Bates's Miscellaneous Repository.

penalty, this case was carried, on writ of error, to the Supreme Court of the State of Ohio, and there the judgment of the court below was reversed as irregular, "for the reason that there was no legal indorsement upon said indictment by the prosecutor [B. W. Ladd] as security for the costs," his name having been "indorsed" on the *back* of the instrument, instead of "at the foot thereof," as directed, in very bad English, by the law.* It is to be feared that Elisha Bates weakened himself, and increased the tendency to an eventual falling away from the truth which he had once known, by the great activity of zeal with which he pursued these judicial contests.

The next cases, requiring a brief notice, were within the State of New York.

Although the Hicksites had taken possession of more than three-fourths of the meeting-houses within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and most of those in the eastern part of the State of New York, including ten out of the eleven meeting-houses in West Chester County; and although they already had possession of the principal portion of a large school fund there, yet they were not satisfied without going to law for more.

They instituted a suit to obtain possession of the Yearly Meeting's boarding-school at Nine Partners in Duchess County, and seized fifty-five acres of the farm belonging to it. But they did not succeed in obtaining possession of the school.†

In the Court of Oyer and Terminer of the County of West Chester, they brought suit to recover the amount

* "The Friend," vol. iii, p. 15. † Foster's Report, vol. i, p. 189.

of a loan of five hundred dollars, with interest, which had been loaned by the treasurer of the school-fund above-mentioned (James Field, who was one of their party) to Charles Field, who remained with Friends. Much testimony was offered by the defendant on the various features of the separation, to show that the Hicks party had really separated from the Society of Friends. But the Court ruled out as irrelevant, all testimony regarding doctrines. The judge, "in his charge to the jury, cleared the whole question of everything but the facts of the case," and gave it as his opinion, that the plaintiff must recover, on the ground of his always having acted as the treasurer of the fund, and the fact that he was supported in his claim by the majority of the owners of it! The jury, coinciding with the judge, gave a verdict accordingly for the plaintiff.

But of all the suits at law on these questions, none were so important, in an historical point of view, as the one instituted in the Court of Chancery of New Jersey, respecting a school-fund belonging to Chesterfield Preparative Meeting at Crosswicks. The examinations, cross-examinations, and pleadings in this suit were published, occupying three large octavo volumes, and developing a great amount of information respecting the history, doctrines, and discipline of the Society from early times.

In this case suit was brought by J. Hendrickson, the treasurer before the separation (who remained with Friends), against T. L. Shotwell, one of the Hicks party, for the amount of a mortgage belonging to the school-fund of that Preparative Meeting; and Stacy Decow, who had been appointed as treasurer by the Hicksite meeting subsequent to the separation, interpleaded with a

claim for their right to the fund, and consequently to the mortgage. After the reading of the pleadings was completed, the depositions of witnesses on each side were taken at Camden, opposite to the city of Philadelphia, before J. J. Foster, an Examiner in the Court of Chancery of New Jersey, commencing on the 2d of sixth month, 1830. It soon became manifest that a wide field was opened for a development of all the circumstances throwing light on the causes and various features of the separation. Many witnesses were examined at great length on both sides, and subjected to close and rigid cross-examination by astute lawyers, aided by vigilant and active partisans on the respective sides. The most prominent of these witnesses on the part of Friends, were Samuel Bettle, William Jackson, Thomas Evans, Samuel Parsons, Thomas Willis, Joseph Whitall, and William Evans; and on the part of the Hicksites, were Abraham Lower, Halliday Jackson, Cephas Ross, John Barrow, and Josiah Gaskill. The taking of their evidence was continued, with sundry intervals, from the date abovementioned till the 13th of fourth month, 1831, when it was completed.*

The first witness examined was Samuel Bettle, of Philadelphia, whose testimony, from the position he held as clerk of the Yearly Meeting, and his long experience in the affairs of the Society, with a mind of great acuteness of observation, took a wide range, developing the doctrines of Friends, and the causes tend-

* See the testimony in full, in Foster's Report of the Examination at Camden, two volumes, Philadelphia, 1831; also the Arguments of counsel and Decision of Court of Chancery of New Jersey in same case, 1834.

ing to produce the separation, with the immediate facts of the separation itself, with which he was personally familiar.*

It was a favorite dogma of the Hicksites, at that time, that each Yearly Meeting was a perfectly independent and irresponsible body; a dogma which has been revived in later times by some who were equally engaged in revolutionizing the doctrines of the Society, though in an opposite direction. In the course of Samuel Bettle's cross-examination, he was asked by the counsel of the Hicksites, "Is not every Yearly Meeting independent of all other Yearly Meetings?" His answer was comprehensive, thus: "I do not conceive that they are; and if desired, I will explain my reasons. The Society is one general body, holding one common faith, and my rights are not confined to the Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia; but if I was to go into any other Yearly Meeting, I have claims and rights there. So it may be perceived, I am a member of the great body of the Society of Friends, and have general rights. But if I depart from the generally accepted faith of that body of Christians, or if I violate its church government, I forfeit those rights. And I consider, what is true of one is true of many, call themselves what they may; hence, Yearly Meetings are not isolated, wholly independent bodies."

The next witness was William Jackson, of London

* If there was a weak point in his testimony, it seems to have been in too much timidity as to an avowal of official approval, by the Society, of the writings of William Penn. He was probably led into this timidity by observing the handle so constantly and insidiously made by the Hicksites, of William Penn's "Sandy Foundation Shaken." See "Foster's Report," vol. i, p. 77.

Grove, in Pennsylvania, then nearly eighty-four years of age; and I can hardly forbear to record the unusual solemnity which his entrance into the court produced upon that mixed assemblage of lawyers, Friends, and people of all sorts. One and all seemed struck into solemn silence by his venerable patriarchal appearance, and the weight that was evidently upon his spirit, and convinced that he was no common character. He gave his testimony with great seriousness; and when, in the tedious cross-examination by which the adverse party tried to entangle him, the lawyer insidiously and profanely asked him: "Has the Society of Friends ever held that the world was *begotten* of God?"—he seemed almost to electrify the audience by his indignant reply: "It is astonishing to me, that, at this time of day, such a question should be put to any individual! Have we *all* turned *unbelievers?*"

In reply to other questions he testified, that if this suit had been merely on a question of *property,* he thought he should not have appeared there; but that his main inducement had been, that he should be clearly understood on the subject of doctrines—that our doctrines might in a solemn manner be placed before the public. And in another portion of his evidence he said that, "if a minister of the Society of Friends should, in his public testimony, depart from the principles or doctrines recognized and held by the Society, it would be justifiable, under the discipline, for a Friend to speak of it even in the meeting, at the time of its occurrence."*

Thomas Willis, of Long Island, testified to the evi-

* "Foster's Report," vol. i, p. 107.

dences of doctrinal error given by Elias Hicks as early as 1818, and subsequently at different times further developed, and of his own endeavors, at various periods, to reclaim him. He also went into a detail of subsequent events of the controversy, and testified to E. Hicks circulating the "Celestial Magnet," and offering *to him* a work of Dr. Joseph Priestley. He was subjected to a very rigid cross-examination, which occupied between three and four days.

The testimony of Samuel Parsons, also of Long Island, was mainly in regard to discipline and historical circumstances. He spoke of having himself labored with Elias Hicks for his recovery from his unsoundness of doctrine, as much as fifteen years before that time, and at various times since; and he testified to the "hissing, shouting, stamping, striking the floor and benches with their canes and umbrellas," which took place on the part of the disciples of Elias Hicks, in the New York Yearly Meeting of 1828, when he (the witness), as clerk of the meeting, was endeavoring to read his minute, and when Elias, after having at first said something to appease the tumult, turning to the assembly, desired them *not to let him* read it. This witness was closely cross-examined respecting facts which had occurred during the controversy, and also in regard to disciplinary questions, and the doctrines of early Friends as bearing on the sentiments of Elias Hicks.

Joseph Whitall, of Woodbury, New Jersey, followed, with a lengthy examination and cross-examination. He testified to E. Hicks having declared to him, in 1822, his belief that Jesus Christ was only a man, the son of Joseph and Mary, and that to pray to Him was "an

abomination;" also, that at a subsequent interview he had declared his sentiment, that "Christ was no more than an Israelite." The circumstances of the separation were pretty fully gone into. The cross-examination was protracted and intricate, with a determined effort to entangle him in regard to the doctrines of the Society; but being preserved inwardly watchful, he proved himself more than a match for the counsel's ensnaring stratagems. His testimony, as recorded, is even now exceedingly interesting and instructive, showing how the true principles of Friends will bear the closest scrutiny of unregenerate men. Many of his answers eminently tend to confound their subtlety, and put to shame their attempts to justify infidelity. His cross-examination extends over thirty-four large and closely printed pages.

Thomas Evans was the next witness examined; who went into an elaborate description of the circumstances of the separation. His cross-examination, chiefly regarding the discipline and doctrines of the Society, occupied about three days. He was called a second time, and re-examined, toward the close of the proceedings. His testimony was very close upon the conduct of the Hicksite party. He averred, among other such things, that while the case of the appeal of Leonard Snowden against the action of Green Street Monthly Meeting was before the Quarterly Meeting, some of the members of the Monthly Meeting would speak from fifteen to thirty-two times in one sitting, to the great interruption and protraction of the business. He declared his belief that if a Yearly Meeting should reject and deny the doctrines

held by the Society of Friends, it would of course, cease to have a just right to the property.*

It seems needless to further specify the distinct features of the testimony of each of the witnesses; but it may be well to add, that William Evans, who (as well as John Paul) was examined toward the close of the proceedings, testified respecting the transactions of the Meeting for Sufferings in regard to what was called "the Creed," etc., and related the occurrences in the meeting of representatives in 1827, respecting the nomination of a clerk for the Yearly Meeting, besides various other circumstances and features of the separation. The cross-examination of this witness aimed at discovering the name of the individual who originally drew up the extracts called a "Creed;" but did not succeed in obtaining it.

On the part of the Hicksites, the first witness was Abraham Lower of Philadelphia; who testified respecting the circumstances, which, according to his view, caused and characterized the separation. His testimony was of such a description as to induce a very long and close cross-examination, which lasted thirteen days, and of which the printed statement occupies one hundred and three pages.† Personal invective, mere hearsay, and harsh epithets and charges upon Friends, with wandering, incoherent, impulsive harangues, were so frequent a feature in his answers, and they were often so totally unconnected with the queries put to him by the counsel, that he had to be several times reminded that he was there *as a witness*, and not as an *advocate*, and desired

* Foster's Report, vol. ii, p. 401.

† Ibid., vol. i, pp 375 to 478.

to keep to the questions put to him, but to very little purpose. The most simple questions would be answered with evasion and prevarication; and he persisted in an entire refusal to answer any questions on doctrines, or what he called spiritual matters, alleging that they were things which a temporal court had no business to meddle with, and thus shielding himself from being drawn into any avowal of what he or his friends did or did not believe.

Cephas Ross, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was the second witness for the Hicksites.* His testimony was mainly a statement of his view of the transactions of the Yearly Meeting of 1827 (which he had then attended for the first time in his life, as he said), and of the separation in Bucks Quarterly Meeting; but he declined answering questions respecting the discipline, as his predecessor had done in regard to doctrines. Indeed he evidently felt himself very ignorant on such subjects, or on the common usages of the Society; and voluntarily acknowledged that he had twice married out of the order of the Society, and that on one occasion, having been provoked by one whom he called "a *bully* in the neighborhood," he had "*fought*" him; and had to make condemnation thereof to his Monthly Meeting!

The third witness on the part of the Hicksites was Halliday Jackson, of Delaware County, Pennsylvania; who testified at considerable length respecting what he considered a series of oppressive transactions on the part of the Elders of Philadelphia. In a much more intelligible and plausible manner than either of the two pre-

* See page 157 of this volume.

ceding witnesses, he detailed, from his own standpoint, the occurrences in the Meeting for Sufferings, the Select Yearly Meeting of 1827, and the general Yearly Meeting of the same year. According to his statement, out of about 26,000 members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting before the separation, about 18,500 went with the Hicks party. But this statement was contradicted by Thomas Evans, who showed that it was erroneous in several particulars.

The testimony of this witness contained much that was merely hearsay evidence, and he was particularly harsh on Ann Jones and other English ministers. The measures taken by Friends to retain possession of the Asylum for the Insane, near Frankford, were particularly animadverted on. His testimony in vindication of the action of the Hicksites in separating, and his allegations against the validity of the proceedings of Friends, evinced very considerable ability, as he steadily kept out of view the all-important subject of doctrines, refusing to answer any questions of that nature. He candidly acknowledged that various acts of his party were unauthorized by the Discipline, but alleged that they were justified by the necessity of the case, a revolution existing in the Society. He spoke largely respecting this alleged *necessity* (and perhaps with reason, if such necessity had existed), but failed to *prove* a necessity, against the strongly contradictory allegations of the other side, including the all-important matter of doctrines. Indeed, if no unsound doctrines had been at the very basis of the question, and the statements of this witness were all to be taken for granted, notwithstanding the rebutting testimony of the opposite party, it might well be supposed

that the Hicksites were not without justification in separating as they did. But the determined silence of all these witnesses in regard to the doctrines manifestly at issue, doctrines fairly proved to have been fundamental in the Society of Friends, threw a dark veil over the whole of their testimony, as it was justly and easily understood to imply that they were not willing to own the sound principles which were abundantly testified to by our ancient Friends. This witness several times voluntarily expressed that it was for the Court of Chancery to decide which was the Society of Friends—a very unsafe avowal under any circumstances.

Charles Stokes, of New Jersey, was examined and cross-examined with reference to local circumstances within Burlington Quarterly Meeting, and regarding the appointment of clerk in the Yearly Meeting of 1827. His answers seemed very evasive and illusory, and he appeared to advocate the decision of matters by *majorities*.

John Barrow, of New York, the clerk of the Select Yearly Meeting of the Hicksites there, testified principally respecting the transactions at that Yearly Meeting in 1828, and on some points of discipline. According to his testimony, the institution of the two suits at law within that Yearly Meeting had been discountenanced by the authorities of the Hicksite body.* They had, however, already obtained possession, as before mentioned, of most of the property of the Society within that Yearly Meeting.

George H. Burr, of Philadelphia, was their next witness, who had taken the pains to count the relative num-

* See "Foster's Report," vol. ii, pp. 265 and 279.

bers of the male attendants at the respective Yearly Meetings in Philadelphia, in 1828, the year after the separation. His testimony was confined to this subject; and according to it there were of those attending at Green Street an average of 1150, and of those attending at Arch Street from 750 to 831.

Then followed Josiah Gaskill of New Jersey, whose testimony was chiefly relative to local circumstances in Burlington Quarterly Meeting and Chesterfield Preparative Meeting. His cross-examination showed much ignorance of the usages of the Society of Friends. He advocated a judgment by *majorities*, thought that the clerk of a meeting had the liberty to "decide as he thought right," and expressed his opinion that "every member" has "equal right to a voice."*

He was succeeded by James Brown, also of New Jersey, whose testimony was of no great importance; chiefly of local disciplinary and numerical matters, and his answers generally quite brief. These were the whole of the witnesses produced on the part of the Hicksites. How that party could suppose that their evidence, defective as it was, could go any way with the Court of Chancery towards counteracting the powerful and copious testimony on the other side, or towards the convincing of thoughtful and reasonable men that they were occupying the true ground of the Society of Friends, is only to be accounted for by the power of party spirit to blind men's judgments.

The examination of witnesses closed on the 13th of the fourth month, 1831. The newly elected governor

* See his ignorance of the practices of Friends animadverted upon by the counsel, p. 313, vol. ii, "Foster's Report."

of the State, and *ex-officio* Chancellor, who, before his election as governor, had been of the counsel of one of the parties in this cause, now called in to his assistance, agreeably to the practice of the court, the chief justice and one of the associate judges of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, viz., Chief Justice Ewing and Judge Drake, before whom the cause was heard. They held the matter under advisement until the seventh month, 1832, and then gave separate opinions in favor of Hendrickson, the treasurer on the part of Friends.

Chief Justice Ewing, in his opinion, chiefly dwelt upon the historical facts and disciplinary features of the case; and the following sentence towards the close, briefly sums up his judgment: "Upon the whole, I am brought, by the most careful, faithful, and minute investigation of which I am capable, to the result, that the Arch Street Meeting was, and the Green Street Meeting was not, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends." He added, as the necessary consequence, that the Hicksite Preparative Meeting of Chesterfield, "was not the Chesterfield Preparative Meeting of Friends at Crosswicks, meant and mentioned in the establishment of the school-fund;" and therefore concluded by recommending the Chancellor to decree in favor of Joseph Hendrickson.

Judge Drake reviewed the evidence as to facts and discipline, but dwelt more largely on the doctrines involved in the case. He brought into view the persistent vagueness and evasiveness of the Hicksian evidence in regard to their religious belief, and justly remarked: "There is nothing characteristic in '*a belief in the Christian religion as contained in the New Testament.*' All

sects of Christians, however widely separated, unite in professing this." After speaking of the doctrines of the divinity of Christ, and the authenticity of the Scriptures, he said: "Upon reviewing the testimony, I am satisfied that the Society of Friends regard these doctrines as *essential*, and that they have the power, by their discipline, to disown those who openly call them in question." Toward the close, he says, in reference to the reticence of the Hicksites on their doctrines, "It is enough, that it is *not made to appear* that they correspond with the religious faith of Friends." And he concludes, as Chief Justice Ewing did, with a recommendation to the Chancellor to decree that the said bond is due and payable to Joseph Hendrickson.

The Chancellor issued his decree accordingly, on the 10th of the seventh month, 1832.

From this decision the Hicksites appealed to the Court of Errors and Appeals; and before this court the case came on for a hearing on the 17th of the seventh month, 1833. About two weeks were occupied in reading the evidence, after which the counsel of the respective parties occupied between two and three weeks in delivering their speeches before the court.*

G. D. Wall, counsel for the Hicksites, commenced his arguments with an insidious attempt to show that "this court is the great Areopagus of the State, sitting, *not* merely in a judicial capacity, tied down by the strict rules of the law, *but* as a *legislative* body, which has full

* The opinions of the judges and the speeches of the counsel, are given in full in "A full Report of the case of Decow and Hendrickson *v.* Shotwell, in the Court of Appeals at Trenton, 1833. Philadelphia: P. J. Gray, 1834."

power *to act according to its own wisdom;*" alleging that in this respect it was like the English House of Lords; a position which, however flattering to the court, was very illusory and unsafe. After this, he labored greatly to prove that ancient Friends not only had no *creed*, or fixed declarations of faith, but that they varied in faith one from the other, respecting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the doctrine of the atonement, and the authority of the Scriptures, not even expecting or looking for any uniform belief in these respects. But his arguments were fallacious and overstrained, with entirely erroneous deductions from the writings of early Friends. He pretended a contrariety where there was none, and assumed a latitude which did not exist. He greatly eulogized Elias Hicks, but kept his erroneous sentiments as much as possible out of sight.

George Wood, one of the counsel for Hendrickson, on the part of Friends, followed, refuting Wall's specious misrepresentations in regard to doctrines, as well as the law of the case, proving that Friends had often put forth declarations of faith, and showing what was their faith on the three points mainly involved. He animadverted pretty strongly on the persistent refusal of the Hicksite witnesses to state their doctrines, while those of Hendrickson had clearly developed what were the doctrines held by the early Friends and the Society from the beginning to that day. He opened out the fallacy of the pretence that the Society had no creed or belief; and fastened upon the Hicksites as a society, the responsibility for the erroneous sentiments enunciated by Elias Hicks.*

* See p. 422 of the "Trenton Report" of Pleadings before the Court of Appeals.

He then went on to show that property of religious societies belongs to the true society, and not being *private* property, is not divisible on the occasion of schisms—that the courts of law had in many instances (some of which he cited) protected the portion of a church or religious body which adhered to the original basis, even though a minority—vindicated the disciplinary proceedings of the elders in Philadelphia in regard to Elias Hicks—and showed clearly that the support given to him was the prominent cause of all the measures of that party resulting in the separation.

Theodore Frelinghuysen, also counsel for Friends, followed Wood in argument, commencing by demolishing Wall's assertion that this court, like the House of Lords in England, is not tied down to certain rules, but can act as a *legislative* body, *according to its own wisdom.* He went on to show that the allegations of the Hicksian witnesses respecting the belief of early Friends, were similar to the imputations cast upon them in their own day by the adversaries of the Society, but that our ancient writers were in reality consistent with each other, and their doctrines in harmony with Holy Scripture. After proving them sound in the three doctrines mainly in question, he proceeded to show that these doctrines were considered among their *fundamental* ones, and that the difference concerning these doctrines was the real cause of the separation, not the frivolous things that the Hicksites attempted to show had caused it. Frelinghuysen however was not quite as clear in his apprehension of the true doctrines of Friends, as his colleague George Wood had been; making use of some unguarded expressions, calling the Bible the Word of God, and im-

plying that Friends held the doctrine of original sin the same as other societies. These matters however were not brought forward prominently, and perhaps had not claimed much of his attention. He eloquently defended the course of the Philadelphia Elders in their treatment of Elias Hicks, showing that they did their duty as faithful watchmen over the safety of the church. He asserted that by the secession the Hicksites lost all claim to be the Society, but did not invalidate the rights of those who remained, and that the property of the Society is not of personal or individual ownership, but belongs to the Society as such, for certain purposes, and cannot be alienated to the advantage of seceding parties. "The Society of Friends," said he, "acknowledge certain great principles of religious faith to be essential and fundamental. . . . Therefore, if a community of members depart in a body from these principles, they possess not the traits of membership, and belong not to the Society of Friends. That which would lawfully cut off individual members, will bar the door effectually to the fellowship of any body, however large, advancing pretensions to the Society of Friends, and denying their faith."

Samuel L. Southard, counsel for the Hicksites, wound up the arguments by a closing speech. He argued that the Hicksites were a *majority*, and ought to have the property on that account, leaving out of view the fact, that they were greatly in the minority of the whole Society. He claimed that they were not bound to disclose their faith or doctrines, and tried to make it appear that *the light within* was the *whole* of Friends' fundamental doctrines—nothing else of much account—that the

Society was a *pure democracy*, and that in extreme cases *majorities must rule*. "We profess," said he, "to be Christians, and to revere the Scriptures, and no earthly tribunal should require more. We profess to be Friends, and beyond that, no cognizance can be taken of our sentiments. We profess to act in the order of the Society, and nothing more can be demanded of us." Empty declamation and false assumptions characterized much of his argument, in which he abused the Philadelphia Elders with the old story of irregular partisan oppression of E. Hicks, but studiously avoided noticing the charges of gross errors of doctrine, publicly uttered, on which their treatment of him was based. He endeavored to make it appear that the "Orthodox" now were like George Keith formerly, advocating the same errors; and toward the close he said, "Our opinions are not to be inferred from those of Elias Hicks;" but omitted to notice how clearly it had been proved that all the disturbances of the secession had arisen from their adherence to E. Hicks when he was repeatedly charged with gross unsoundness in the Christian faith.

Southard completed his argument on the morning of the 14th of eighth month, 1833, and in the afternoon of the same day the Court resumed the consideration of the cause, and by a vote of seven against four, determined to affirm the decree of the Chancellor. The document affirming the decree and dismissing the appeal, was issued the next day, Governor Williamson appending thereto, by permission of the court, his individual solicitude for an amicable settlement of all matters in dispute.

I have deemed it right to go somewhat at large into a description of the main features of this famous suit, not

as approving of the inception of it, but under a view of its wide scope, and the belief that in its progress, through the overruling hand of Divine Providence, important developments were made respecting the history, doctrines, and discipline of the Society, which are fraught with interest and instruction; though they can only be imperfectly indicated by a sketch like that I have here attempted, referring the reader to the official documents alluded to, for further information.

In this legal controversy, statements were produced of the relative numbers of members on each side, which, however, differed very considerably. The account submitted by Halliday Jackson on the part of the Hicksites made it appear that the whole number of members of both parties in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1829, was 26,258, of whom 18,485 were Hicksites, 7344 were "Orthodox," and 429 "neutral." The statement exhibited by Thomas Evans on the other side, was not a complete one, including only six of the eleven Quarterly Meetings. In these six, the aggregate number appears to be 7241 Friends called Orthodox, and 6123 of the Hicksian party. But in the five other Quarterly Meetings the Hicksites probably had a considerable majority. So that there is not much ground to doubt that in the whole Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, the Hicksian party was somewhat the larger number.

In the Yearly Meeting of New York, the case was probably similar, though with a rather larger preponderance of the Hicks party. The statement exhibited by one of their witnesses, John Barrow, makes the total number of members of New York Yearly Meeting 19,302 (exclusive of three small meetings not reported);

of which the Hicksites claimed to have 12,532, leaving 5913 for the "Orthodox," and 857 "neutrals." But all these enumerations are unreliable.

In Baltimore Yearly Meeting the Hicks party had a large preponderance; but in Ohio they seem to have only had a proportion of from one-third to one-half of the whole; while in the large Yearly Meeting of Indiana they were comparatively but few; and in those of Virginia, Carolina, and New England there were scarcely any. They must have been decidedly a minority of the whole Society even in the United States, and still more so in a computation including the members in Europe at the epoch of the separation. The whole Society in Europe and America then probably fell little short of 95,000, from which the Hicksian separation may have taken off about one-third.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "BEACON" SCHISM.

WELL might the ways of Zion mourn, in a contemplation of the desolating scourge which had swept so many away from the faith of the gospel, and led them to unite with those who were denying "the Lord that bought them." But we have henceforward to contemplate the more plausible, though equally disastrous working of an opposite spirit, or rather of the opposite workings of the same spirit in another form.

As early as 1818, and perhaps for some few years even before that, there had plainly appeared in the Society in England, an increasing tendency to promote an outward superficial system of religion, based on human learning and research, rather than inward spiritual experience.

This tendency, I believe, was unconsciously or unwatchfully promoted by that honorable and worthy man, Henry Tuke, of York, some years before the above date, in publishing his well-known treatise on the principles of Friends without any recognition of the great doctrine of the Holy Spirit's immediate teachings being the primary rule of faith and practice, but deducing all our testimonies exclusively from the Holy Scriptures. His object doubtless was to show *the agreement* of our profession with Scripture; which was well; but he does not appear to have perceived the danger of ex-

cluding that all-important spiritual groundwork, or of tacitly leaving it out of view. His unwary example was wonderfully followed and enlarged upon by many in after years.

Accordingly, about the year 1818 there was proposed for the Yearly Meeting's boarding-school at Ackworth, the introduction of a systematic easy method of teaching and expounding Holy Scripture, and catechizing thereupon, as the basis of religious instruction, after the practice pursued in other communities, and altogether different from what Friends had formerly been accustomed to, or had thought it safe to depend upon. Joseph John Gurney is said to have been the chief promoter of this change. Many friends became alarmed. John Barclay, though then quite a young man, and but recently escaped, himself, from the allurements of the world and the entangling results of worldly education and associations, saw with pain the nature and dangerous tendency of this innovation. Under the pressure of solicitude for the safety of the Society, he addressed three letters on the subject to two influential members of the committee having charge of the school, which were published after his decease. They bore a noble testimony to the superior efficacy of that divine knowledge which results from faithful obedience to "the word nigh in the heart"—"the engrafted word, able to save the soul"—over all the product of intellectual study and mere literal acquaintance with the Scriptures; and advocated that kind of instruction which is founded on a real living concern for the welfare of the children, and has the immediate leading and prompting of the Spirit of Christ, to give it authority and efficacy. In one of these letters, he

brought forward by way of illustration, the instance of his worthy ancestor Robert Barclay; who declared, "that he did not come to receive the truth by strength of argument, or by a particular disquisition of each doctrine, and convincement of his understanding thereby, but by being secretly reached by the life," having his heart touched by that "secret power," even in silence; and so finding the evil weakening in him, and the good raised up, he came to hunger more and more after its increase, and perfect redemption; adding his testimony, that "indeed this is the surest way to become a Christian;" and that afterwards the needful knowledge would not be withheld. John Barclay saw plainly that there was great deficiency among the youth, in regard to an acquaintance with the principles of our profession; but in looking at the proposed plans, he declared that he "lamented the remedy more than the disease; because," said he, "then we stand in danger of having a set of young formalists rise about us, whose heads are more likely to be filled with notions, than with that nothingness of self, which is as truly the introduction to all right knowledge on these subjects, as the other is a snare and a stumbling-block in the way of it."

This seems like a truly prophetic view of what was coming, and has since so manifestly come, like a sweeping flood over all parts of the Society.

In one of the letters, after earnestly expostulating against the new project of learning religion "by rote," he exclaimed, "Oh, what will all this come to? Can I call this anything better than an apostasy from the Life and Power of the substantial eternal Truth, as it was revealed to our forefathers in the silence of all flesh, as they

waited on the Lord? Can I say anything less of these devices, than that they *strike at the very root and ground and foundation* thereof?"

He lived to see this "apostasy" still more sadly developed, and the "root and ground" of our faith still more clearly and fearfully "struck at." But the sentiments and warnings of such Friends as John Barclay, and Sarah L. Grubb, Thomas Shillitoe, and George and Ann Jones, were already beginning to be by no means acceptable to some who would be leaders of the people, and were designated by such, as "peculiar views," and "narrow-minded," though they only went to sustain the ancient and well-known faith and practice of the Society.

In England the influence of increased wealth and luxury and ease, was producing the natural result, through unwatchfulness on the part of individuals, and the unfaithfulness of many of those set as watchmen over the flock. No *positive* unsoundness of principle was hitherto *officially* sanctioned; yet it is not to be denied, that for many years the great distinguishing doctrine of our early Friends, respecting the necessity of holiness and the possibility of freedom from sin in this life, known amongst us as the doctrine of Perfection, as advocated by Robert Barclay and others of that day, had been gradually disappearing from view, and had now become practically very much ignored by the great bulk of the members; as well as our testimony to the paramount authority of the Holy Spirit as the primary guide in the way of salvation. Thus the platform of the Society was lowered, and a downward step taken towards placing it on a level with other denominations of professors, yet without any open official advocacy of novel

doctrines. On some other points, too, there was a prevalent siding or edging towards affinity with the popular forms of religion; a meeting the world half-way; by which fleshly desires for popularity were gratified, but at the expense of leanness of soul, and oppression of the seed of life there. Dwarfishness as to religious attainments had indeed become a general feature over the Society.

The storm of the Hicksite contention had, however, roused some from their couches of ease; but, unhappily, it had also given an opportunity for the arising of a spirit, through the wiles of the cunning adversary, ostensibly antagonistic to Hicksism, and loudly declaiming against its dangers, but going to an opposite extreme, and equally deriving its doctrines from something else than a true learning in the school of Christ, through the inward manifestations of His Spirit. Many, in their horror of Hicksism, were caught with this spirit, and led into views equally successful in drawing them aside from really following Christ in the way of His leading. Hicksism had undertaken to discard all reliance on what Christ Jesus our Lord did for us outwardly in that blessed atoning sacrifice; and now the tendency was, on the other hand, to instil the belief that our early Friends had gone too far, in making so much of the *inward* work of Christ, and that their course therein had laid the groundwork of the errors of Hicksism. The Hicksites, too, had denied the divine authority of Holy Scripture; but now the tendency appeared to flow with a high tide to set the Scriptures up as *the primary rule* of faith and practice, and to allege that even the teachings of the

Holy Spirit were to come only through the medium of "the Written Word."

About the time when Elias Hicks's course was advancing to its culmination, J. J. Gurney began to publish a series of professedly religious works, by which this tendency to the opposite errors was rapidly extended and greatly encouraged over the Society in Great Britain. Between the years 1820 and 1826, he had published edition after edition of several books, including his "Letter (to Dr. Alderson, father of Amelia Opie) on Christianity," his "Peculiarities" (afterwards styled "Distinguishing Views"), of the Society of Friends, and his "Essays on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Practical Operation of Christianity;" whole editions of some or all of which were gratuitously distributed among the members and others; and thus sown broadcast over the land they seemed likely to pervade every family among Friends, and vast numbers among others. The last-named work particularly, first issued in 1825, and his "Portable Evidence," in 1832,* contained many sentiments and modes of thought and expression, manifestly at variance with the hitherto acknowledged views and modes of expression in the Society, and ought to have effectually alarmed the faithful members. But many were lulled asleep, and others were afraid to place themselves in an attitude of conflict with a champion of such wealth, learning, power, and influence. Others felt as if the Society was flattered by the approbation which his works elicited from the world at large. Whatever

* See "An Examination of the Memoirs and Writings of J. J. Gurney," by W. H. Philadelphia, 1856.

may have been his own intentions in this early part of his career, or however honest he may have been in a belief that he was doing good, it is certain that the tendency of his writings (proceeding as they did mainly from an intellectual study of theology, so-called), was to lead off the Society from the ancient ground, that Christ within by his Spirit is the great Teacher of his people, and that a true and saving knowledge of God can be obtained only through obedience to the successive unfoldings and purifying operations of that inspeaking Word of Divine Grace; and on the other hand, to inculcate the necessity of *studying* religion by the powers of the human mind. But the popularity of the writer being very great, as the brother and coadjutor of Elizabeth Fry, and the novelty of such writings in the Society being much admired, the books found ready entrance into Friends' families, and were greedily perused, and implicitly believed by many; and a great impulse was thus given to a superficial, self-active, and self-pleasing form of religion; and all this was welcomed as an antidote to Hicksism. Only a few saw through the flimsy veil of learning, and perceived that unsound sentiments lurked beneath, and even reared their heads openly to view in the sight of those whose eyes truly abode under the anointing; and still fewer were honest and faithful enough to express their dissatisfaction to the author, and warn their fellow-members of the danger. Thus the system of an intellectual study of religion rapidly spread, and naturally led to great activity of the unregenerate mind in things belonging to the safety of the soul, very different from the deep and self-denying views promulgated by our forefathers; and many soon began to throw off all

the trammels of primitive doctrines and testimonies, and came out boldly against our ancient Friends, in print and in public declarations.

The following warning testimony on the other hand, is quoted by Daniel Wheeler* as having been delivered by a female minister (supposed to have been Sarah L. Grubb), in the Yearly Meeting of 1832, viz.: "In a striking and awful manner," he says, she "adverted to the permitted visitation of the pestilence (cholera) in this country; and afterwards she had a very close and powerful testimony to the meeting, on the present state of our religious Society, by way of solemn warning of the approaching judgments of the Lord upon us for the neglect of those things, which in a peculiar manner, were given us to bear in the early times of our Society, when Friends were called out from the world to be a separate people. Her concern was, that we should return to first principles; but her more especial warning was, that if there were not a coming down from the heights to which many have climbed, there were those amongst us who might be compared to the golden vessels of the temple, such as had really stood the fire, and had not only been rightly filled, but employed by the Lord to communicate to the people, who would be permitted to be carried away captives to Babylon. That there was and is amongst us, a Babel now building, whose top is intended to reach unto Heaven, which must and will come down; that there is (though not clearly seen by ourselves), a peeling and scattering amongst us, which is clearly shown in the vision and light of the Lord;

* Memoirs of Daniel Wheeler, London, 1842, p. 206.

and that if we did not repent and return, we should be left very few in number. But that the Lord would not leave himself without a people, etc. She spoke farther in reference to some, who had been rightly gifted to speak the word of the Lord as from the mouth of the Lord; but who, for want of dwelling low and deep enough, had had their brightness dimmed; adding, 'when Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel, but when he offended in Baal, he died.'" Daniel Wheeler added, addressing his family in Russia, "If we consider the hundreds who are busily engaged in turning the attention of the people to the letter, to the traditions and ordinances of man, 'after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ,' what must be the end thereof?"

John Wilbur, a minister of Rhode Island, visited Great Britain in the service of the gospel, in 1831 and 1832, spending most of the time in England until his return in the beginning of 1833. Whilst there, very unexpectedly to himself, his mind was brought into deep exercise and distress by the discovery of the spirit at work among some influential members, at variance with the well-known doctrines of Friends. As he advanced in his religious engagements, more and more of its insidious workings was brought to his view, to such a degree that he was led to fear, either a general lapse as a body, or otherwise a great rent or division.* Finding this departure so formidable, on account of the talents and station of many of those engaged in it, he was brought into great mourning over the flock of God, even

* John Wilbur's Journal and Correspondence, p. 270.

in that land where the pure standard of truth had been so eminently supported in the days of our forefathers. He was deeply afflicted in seeing the subtlety of the enemy, in taking advantage of the Hicksian heresy, by leading many into the opposite extreme—thus plunging them into a lapse as fatal on the other side—both these errors being insidiously defective in relation to the true faith in Christ, in all his gracious offices for our salvation.

Under the pressure of these apprehensions, while in London at the time of the Yearly Meeting, he took an opportunity of opening his uneasiness to J. J. Gurney, in company with Jonathan Hutchinson, and George and Ann Jones. But he received no satisfaction from him.

To show his feelings under these circumstances more clearly, we will quote a few passages from his own account.

In speaking of his attendance of London Yearly Meeting in 1832, after mentioning that with the exception of having visited the women's meeting, he had been silent through all the meetings for business, being greatly exercised therein, he says: "In this meeting, great pro-"fessions of faith in the mediation and atonement of "Jesus Christ our Lord, were made, and this profession "was abundantly reiterated; but still I mournfully felt "a great want of that precious sweetness and savor of "life, which gives weight and solidity, as well as power, "to a meeting; and without which all the professions "of faith, however high and glowing as to words, are "but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And I "am more and more confirmed in the belief, that the "most full and literally sound acknowledgment may

"be made, of faith in the blood and sacrifice of Jesus "Christ, our blessed Redeemer, and without any reserve "too, but still it may be no more than in the oldness of "the letter; and *that*, for want of believing fully in, and "of being really and practically quickened by the living "power of the gospel, that calls to, and enables to keep "the commandments of Christ our Lord, by whose "Spirit and grace we are sanctified, through obedience."

"On account of overwhelming afflictions, and weak- "ness of body, I was not able to attend the concluding "sitting of the Select Yearly Meeting on seventh-day "evening; for my mental grief was such, that I could "not refrain from excessive weeping, after the conclusion "of the meetings for discipline; so, under the kind su- "perintendence of my dear friend George Crosfield, I "went immediately to my lodgings, and retired to my "chamber; where my head was as waters, and mine "eyes as fountains of tears, in weeping for the backslid- "ing of the sons and daughters of my people, occasion- "ing the face of the beloved to be so turned from us, in "the day of our great necessity." (Page 124.)

Again, after attending the Half-Yearly Meeting for Wales, which was, he says, a painful meeting to him throughout, he remarks: "I kept to my chamber [in the "evening], and there mourned over the state of things "in this land; being fully aware that there are many "in the station of ministers, who are, in great measure, "lost, as to the times and seasons, the openings and the "shuttings of the blessed Spirit of the Gospel; and whose "minds seem to be so beclouded and darkened, that the "true shining is not seen to go forth with brightness as "in primitive times, nor as a lamp that should burn

"through the whole gospel day. And it is greatly to be "feared that there are some who are leaning too much "to their own understanding, instead of waiting, in pa- "tience and meekness, on Jesus Christ, the great minister, "who always keeps the key in his own hands, and openeth "only when he will, and to whom he will. . . . . So "I continue to mourn, and to feel like adopting the "prophet's language of grief, as I pass through this "land, 'How is the gold become dim? How is the "'most fine gold changed? The stones of the sanctuary "'are poured out in the top of every street! The pre- "'cious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are "'they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the "'hands of the potter?' For lo! some who have shone "apparently as stars of the first magnitude, seem to be "in danger of a total eclipse! The outward standing "and influence of some is such, that the case seems "almost if not entirely irremediable, and what the re- "sult of things will be, is difficult to foresee. But many "there are among this people, who are truly awakened "to serious and fearful apprehensions, lest this Society "should be shaken from its foundation." (Page 137.)

A few months afterwards, he remarks:

"A disposition is making its appearance in divers "places in this nation, and among Friends, to think "very little of the cross of Christ, practically, and to "plead for liberality, both of faith and practice; the "perceptible influence of the Holy Spirit is mournfully "deprecated by many members of our Society; some of "them in conspicuous standing, are now disposed to put "the Scriptures in the place of the Spirit; and seem "ready to hold them as the only rule of faith and prac-

"tice, or guidance of Christians . . . . . and notwith-
"standing they fully acknowledge the propitiatory sac-
"rifice, with its blessed effects for the remission of sins,
"and place great dependence upon it, yet at the same
"time, Christ crucified is to them, as to the Jews and
"Greeks formerly, to the one a stumbling-block, and to
"the other foolishness. And there is much reason to
"fear, that these wise and learned professors under our
"name, who seem disposed to look down rather con-
"temptuously upon the old sort of Friends, are design-
"ing to bring about a change in some of the prominent
"and essential doctrines of our Society." (Page 150.)

At London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting, which was "very full and large," he says: "Dear Ann Jones "was exercised in solemn supplication, and William "Allen and Daniel Wheeler, in testimony, acceptably; "but as for me, I sat silently, under a sorrowful sense "of the state of things in this land; for it is clearly to "be felt and seen, that among this people under our "name, there are two armies arrayed, army against "army, lifting up their weapons one against the other; "and great struggles are plainly to be felt and seen, by "those whose eyes are happily anointed by the finger of "Jesus. It is seen also, that instead of 'one Lord, one "faith, and one baptism,' there is a diversity of faith, as "it regards the ministration of Him who is one, by his "holy spiritual baptism, and as to the worship of the "true tabernacle. And it is greatly to be feared that "this strife will not always be kept within the secret "chamber, and subdued, without the exposure of Anti-"christ, and his kingdom, and without a storm of the "elements in which he worketh. And much commo-

"tion, and thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes "will be seen and heard in divers places; and the tab- "ernacle of those who have slidden from the sure foun- "dation, the Rock of Ages, however lofty and beautiful "to look upon, will be thrown down, and removed out "of the way, and their place will be known no more in "the heritage of the Lord's spiritual Israel." (Page 157.)

Under these sorrowful apprehensions, and in deep solicitude for the safety of the Society, John Wilbur addressed a series of letters, six in number, to his friend George Crosfield, an Elder of Liverpool, for the purpose of developing the grounds of his exercises and concern, and with a desire that the danger which threatened might be averted. George Crosfield afterwards published those letters on his own responsibility (though with John Wilbur's knowledge), believing with many other friends who had seen the manuscripts, that they were eminently adapted to the state of the Society at that date. A letter from Margaret Crosfield to John Wilbur, written while the letters were in process of being printed, contains the following development of their motives in thus undertaking the publication of them.

"My mind is very well, and resolute in carrying for- "ward the publication of these letters, believing the "very fulness of time is come for something of the kind "to be given forth, for the comfort and encouragement "of many faithful Friends, the strengthening of the "weak and wavering, and the instruction of the igno- "rant; and I am satisfied, in that it has in any degree, "fallen to our lot to assist in raising again the ancient "standard of Truth in this country, where George Fox "so faithfully labored; and that which it will expose

"us to, from loose and careless professors, we are willing "to bear for Jesus Christ's sake."

These six Letters to George Crosfield appear to have been published by him while John Wilbur was absent in Ireland, in the autumn of 1832.

The first letter gives a general view of the importance of steadfastness on the part of Friends to the testimonies intrusted to them, with the expression of his earnest desire that the Society might hold on its way, and continue faithful in bearing testimony to the spiritual nature and design of the gospel.

The second letter was in regard to the fall of man, and his redemption through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and man's co-operation with the offers of his grace, by repentance and submission to the sanctifying and regenerating efficacy of his Spirit; and concluded with the following salutary expressions: "Then how "needful it is to have a full belief in the doctrines of "Scripture, and in every part of them; not merely as- "senting to some and passing slightly over others, for "fear that a practical and living belief in them should "lead us to much pain and conflict of spirit, and to the "mortifying of the will of the flesh. Then let every "one come down and prove himself, and examine by the "light of Christ, all the hidden and dark avenues of his "heart, remembering that every secret thing must be "opened and brought to judgment in the day of Jesus "Christ. And oh, how desirable, that when that day "shall come upon every one of us, we may submit to it, "while there is yet tenderness in our hearts, so that a "spirit of unbelief in any one of these great doctrines of "life and salvation may never be entertained; that none

"of the great truths of the gospel may be looked upon "with indifference, but that every one of us may be so "quickened and made alive unto God, by the resurrec-"tion power of Jesus Christ, as to be furnished and "blessed with the perceptive and all-instructive guidance "and influence of his Holy Spirit."

The third letter showed the frequent tendency there had been in the professing Christian Church, to go off the straight track of the doctrine of the gospel, on one side or on the other, through the artful wiles of the enemy; how George Fox and his contemporaries were instrumental in the Lord's hand for the revival of the pure gospel covenant and doctrines, and, having Christ their captain with them, were enabled to stand against all the fury of the adversary, striving to lay waste and paralyze their testimony; yet that some, even in those early days, giving way to spiritual pride and the will of unslain self, were carried away into by-paths; and again many in modern times had been, through the same subtlety of Satan, deceived, and even led "to suppose, or to "profess that they supposed, that our first Friends did "not believe in the true divinity and reconciling sacri-"fice of our Lord Jesus Christ; than which a greater "perversion can hardly be imagined." He entirely contradicts such assertions of the Hicksites, showing their utter groundlessness, and declares his belief, "that the "more true spiritual Christianity a man has, the better "will he be qualified rightly to see and to estimate the "doctrines of Scripture, relative to the outward coming "and offices of Jesus Christ."

The fourth letter discourses more at large on the Hicks secession in America, showing how the devil,

anxious to make an inroad upon a people whom he knew to be tenacious of their great principle of the Light of Christ, artfully contrived "a kind of compromise with them," so as to allow them to retain this "distinguishing article," if he could but induce them to deny the proper divinity and atonement of Christ; knowing that, thus drawn aside, "they would not then, "in the very nature of things, be sharers in the true "light of Christ within them, and walk in it," whatever their profession of it; but would be rendered liable to mistake "his false radiance" for the real light. And succeeding in this scheme with very many, he filled their mouths with the cry of "the light! the Spirit! the Spirit of the Lord!"—and this partly for the purpose, that thereby others might be brought even "to loath the very name of 'Christ within the hope of glory,' or Christ in spirit," by witnessing His name, in this part of the covenant, "so continually brought forward and taken in vain by those well known to be antichristians." "Because, therefore, the Socinian or Hicksite has sin-"fully denied the divinity and atonement of Christ, "shall we unnecessarily, and sinfully too, abandon every-"thing else relative to God's salvation, that so we may "establish what they deny; as if it were possible for "us to obtain salvation by the one, without the other? "And will any be driven, through cowardice, from a "practical faith in divine grace, and the light and spirit "of the gospel, because these seceders have illusively "pretended thereto? Will any man be deterred from "naming and believing in the Holy Name, because the "atheist chaunts it off with scorn? Not the true Chris-"tian, no; for if the very worst of men deceptively pro-

"fess the best of things, that will never occasion the true "believer to abandon them; nor if the unfaithful aban- "don one part of the covenant, professing to support "the other, it will never induce the former to reverse it, "for in so doing he would be a covenant breaker as much "as the other.

"Now, in conclusion, I would ask, if it is not alike "dangerous to man, and dishonorable to God, to deny "that Jesus Christ has done anything for our salvation, "without us; and to deny that he is doing anything for "us, within us, for the same purpose: seeing that, if we "reject either of these provisions, we cannot be saved, "for we cannot so much as begin a good life, without "the application of that great sacrifice of his body, once "made for all men. Nor, in the second place, can we "advance a single day of our lives in the Christian way "and warfare against sin, without his presence and help "continually extended to us."

The fifth letter takes the ground of Robert Barclay and all our early Friends, that the Spirit of Christ, and not the Holy Scriptures, is "the first and best leader and controller of the Christian's life and practice," or, as they called it, "the primary rule;" and shows conclusively that this doctrine, which is indeed the true doctrine of the Bible, by no means derogates from the excellency of those writings of holy men of God, written as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. "Nor can there be any dis- "honor brought to the sacred writings, by placing the "all-manifesting Spirit, and light, and grace of God, "through our Lord Jesus Christ, over and above them "in the rightful order of God's manifestations and pro- "visions for the children of men. Nay, truly, it cannot

"be derogatory to the Scriptures, nor to any other crea-
"ture here below, to place the second Adam, the Lord
"from heaven, the quickening Spirit, above them." He then fully admits them "to stand above all other writings," and "to be the only outward fit rule and standard by which all the professors of Christianity may prove and try their doctrines;" yet adds, that, inasmuch as the various denominations have different confessions of faith, all founded as they suppose on a right understanding of Scripture, whenever a member of a religious body thinks he has found important errors in the fundamental doctrines of his own people, it becomes him to be candid and leave them, rather than, like the leaders of the late Seceders of America, secretly and artfully endeavor to gain over the unwary to their new views. He might have carried this view a little further, by showing that though, on the one hand, the Scriptures are the test of doctrine between those of different professions, to try which comes the nearest to the Gospel standard; yet, on the other hand, when once a religious Society has settled for itself its own standard as being in accordance with what it believes to be a correct understanding of Scripture; then, in order to try the consistency or inconsistency of its own members with its profession, the appeal must be, not merely to the Scriptures (which are variously interpreted), but to those interpretations of Scripture which have always been received and acknowledged as characterizing the faith of that particular people. Otherwise, no society, or gathered visible church, can be said to have any settled religious faith and belief, as belonging to itself, and not liable to be constantly disturbed with impunity by innovators within its own borders.

The sixth letter contained an earnest appeal for the continued faithful maintenance of the testimonies of Friends to plainness and self-denial, so little appreciated by the advocates of the new views.

I have thought it necessary thus to show at some length the tenor of these letters, inasmuch as, although highly approved by sound Friends, who saw their salutary applicability to the state of the Society at that time, yet on the other hand, they brought on their author an abundant share of obloquy, from those who favored the modern innovations, and afterwards became one of the chief pleas for the persecutions which assailed him in his own country. John Wilbur had, however, pursued the straight path of gospel order. He had, while in England, taken an opportunity of privately opening his uneasiness to at least one of the main instigators of the new doctrines, Joseph John Gurney, and probably also to others; and had been faithful in his testimonies against these errors in his public declarations, before the issue of these letters; and though some influential members in New England would have gladly put him to trouble in consequence of his open and firm stand for the truth, they could make no progress against him as long as Moses Brown lived; for that honest man and venerable patriarch frustrated their attempts,* knowing they were out of the truth.

Elisha Bates, a minister of Mount Pleasant, Ohio, through unwatchfulness was caught with the new views, and going to England in the year 1833, and again in

* See two letters from Moses Brown, in J. Wilbur's Journal, pp. 176 and 177.

1836, greatly strengthened this innovating spirit, by joining with those who were openly repudiating some of our fundamental principles. And being of a fluent pen as well as speech, Isaac Crewdson, William Boulton, and other leaders in the schism, gladly associated him with themselves in their attempts to subvert the characteristic doctrines and testimonies of the Society.

In the year 1835, Isaac Crewdson of Manchester, published a small book, entitled, "A Beacon to the Society of Friends," ostensibly warning the members against the awful errors of Elias Hicks, on the assumption that many of the writings of our earliest authors tended in that direction, and calling the Society in this day to sentiments supposed by him to be more evangelical than those of our forefathers, as the only way to avoid the spread of Hicksism through the Society in Great Britain. This book, soon after its appearance, was followed by a shower of pamphlets in the same direction, many of which were very crude and frothy, but all tending to raise a commotion and kindle unhallowed fire.

The "Beacon" by Isaac Crewdson, and the Bible-studying meetings held at the house of William Boulton, were indeed nothing more than a genuine fruit of the views which had been advocated for about ten years in the successive publications of Joseph John Gurney. The difference between J. J. Gurney's writings and the "Beacon," was simply this, that the former laid the groundwork, and the latter the superstructure; that the former used comparatively cautious language, while the latter spoke plain out; that the former upheld the Scriptures as the source of divine knowledge, paramount to the Spirit, or as if the Spirit taught only through them,

thus necessarily, although at first secretly, undermining the opposite doctrine held by Friends; while the latter writer, besides doing this in full, with regard to the Scriptures, also came forth boldly and more distinctly in a denunciation of our great distinguishing testimony to the Light of Christ in the heart, as the primary teacher or rule, and the universality of Saving Grace, as held by Barclay and all our ancient writers.

J. J. Gurney had limited "revelation" to what is written in the Scriptures; which, he declared, were sufficient "to direct our faith, and regulate our conduct," were "the only authorized record of divine truth," the only medium by which to obtain a knowledge of the nature of sin, or of "a call to repentance extended to the whole human race," and that they "unfold the law of God in *all its strength* and *spirituality*, in *all* the glorious *variety* of its *details*."*

The "Beacon" discarded the universal and saving efficacy of the light of Christ, inwardly revealed; and denied any true knowledge of God, or of his salvation, except through the Scriptures—taught that it was a "pernicious theory" to speak of the Scriptures as secondary, and the Spirit as a higher rule—declared that it was "presumptuous" to assert the sufficiency of "the inward light," calling it a "delusive notion"—designated the belief that "the inward light is the primary rule of faith and practice," as a "dangerous error"—and asserted that "setting up a light within, above the revelation of

* See J. J. Gurney's "Portable Evidence," English edition, pp. 69, 91, 114, etc.

the Spirit of God by Holy Scripture, has led, step by step, into the deadly gulf of deism."*

On the doctrine of Imputative Righteousness, too, they held the same ground. J. J. Gurney had said, "Our *only* claim on the heavenly inheritance, therefore, consists in this, that God is pleased to *impute to those who believe*, the perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ;"† and that *faith* "is a *reliance* of the soul on the *incarnate Son*," thus limiting it to the incarnation alone. In like manner, the "Beacon" said: "Our immense debt is cancelled by the precious blood of Christ, if, by *faith*, we lay hold on Him as our *surety*." Do not both these statements equally overstrain the precious doctrine of the atonement to such an extent as to exclude the divine declaration, that "*without holiness* no man shall see the Lord?"

J. J. Gurney had repeatedly designated the Scriptures, as "*the* written word," "*the* word of the Lord," thus coming as near as he could, and opening the door, towards calling them the Word of God;‡ and had declared that from *them* "we *derive our hopes* of the immortal crown of righteousness." The author of the "Beacon," in like manner, though more openly, styled them "the Word," "the Word of God;" argued to prove the correctness of the term as applied to them as well as to Christ; and (page 92) restricted the possession of the "law written in the heart," to "true believers," and (page 119) "the manifestation of the Spirit given to every man," to the Corinthian believers only!

* See the "Beacon," all through the volume.

† "Gurney's Essays on Christianity," Amer. edit., p. 390.

‡ Ibid., pp. 88, 350, etc.

It is also well known, that the two authors coincided in their views respecting *Prayer*, the calling of the first-day of the week *the Christian Sabbath*, and styling the four narrative accounts of the Evangelists "*the Gospel*," in obvious contradiction of the views of true Friends from the beginning.

In one particular, Isaac Crewdson appears to have gone further than J. J. Gurney. In order to bring our silent worship into discredit, he branded the system as "Quietism"—making a parade of this epithet, as if he thought it an excellent handle against us—and also, as "a religion of *feelings*," evidently implying of mere *enthusiasm*—and said (page 96) that "to imagine that silence and stillness are essential to true worship, would be a great error." In most of these attacks, it is true, he professed to be aiming at Hicksism; but in reality the blow was manifestly meant for ancient Quakerism.

We have thus seen how far these two writers really worked together, in pulling down the old landmarks of our profession. It may indeed be safely said, that the works of J. J. Gurney were far more efficient in bringing "Beaconism" upon the Society, than the writings of the author of the "Beacon;" and that the latter never could have accomplished the schism it promoted, had not the ground been prepared for it beforehand, by the general acceptance of the books published by J. J. Gurney. How was it then, that the one involved himself in the censure of the Society, while the other entirely escaped? It was because J. J. Gurney was wary, and capable of so smoothing his mode of expression, and so salving over any sore place among such as might begin to feel uneasy, that he retained his position of great in-

fluence; while Isaac Crewdson was of a bold and straightforward temperament, came plainly out with his denunciations of our ancient faith, and being quite capable of maintaining the position he had taken by confusing the views of his opposers, preferred to pursue his course openly, rather than either to modify his expressions for the sake of making peace, or to suffer himself to be persuaded that he was in error, by men whom he plainly saw to be weakly inconsistent with their own expressed convictions. J. J. Gurney also seems to have perceived that the rapid course of the advocates of the "Beacon" was likely to drift them quickly into a separation from the main body of the Society; and not being prepared for that step himself, but aiming to carry the whole Society into an acceptance of his own views through his great popularity and tact, he preferred to abandon these his too ardent pupils, and let them drift, if they must, rather than launch himself with them on so desperate a venture.

There were several attempts soon made, through the press, to counteract the pernicious tendency of the opinions advanced in the "Beacon." The first of these was a short letter, addressed to its author by Thomas Thompson, an Elder of Liverpool Meeting. Then followed a more elaborate "Defence of the Doctrine of Immediate Revelation and Universal and Saving Light," by Thomas Hancock, M.D., another elder of Liverpool; which showed in a clear and firm manner, but with a mild and moderate tone of argument, the reasonableness of the true doctrine of Friends on these subjects, their accordance with Scripture truth, and their incongruity with the views advocated in the "Beacon."

After this came a fiery attack on the "Beacon," and its coadjutors both in and outside of the Society, entitled "Truth Vindicated," etc., a book of 224 pages, published anonymously, but soon afterwards known to be written by Henry Martin, a young and ardent man, zealously attached to Friends' principles as advocated by our early writers. This was a powerful and crushing rebuke of the "Beacon;" but the writer indulged, perhaps, in too much of a taunting harshness of expression, calculated to produce irritation among those whom he so recklessly lashed; and, moreover, launched into a very bold and aggressive mode of warfare, in which he did not always carefully guard his own lines from assault, or at least from being charged with overstraining the positions of those whom he was opposing, or with leaving out views which ought to have been introduced, in order to avoid an appearance of more or less randomness or irreverence of manner, in his mode of treating principles of momentous importance. The main tendency and intent of the work, however, was to sustain the ancient doctrines of Friends against these insidious attacks, and to expose to view the utter want of solid ground which the latter had to stand upon; but it is to be regretted that his intent was not carried out with more discretion and caution, that the pure truth might not suffer reproach by his unguarded style of writing. As an instance, we may refer to the circumstance, that his advocacy of the Holy Spirit being the primary rule, instead of the Scriptures given forth by that Spirit, would have been far more satisfactory and clear from cavil, if he had simply added his own adhesion to what Friends have always acknowledged, that the Scriptures are *also a rule*, though

a *secondary* rule, subordinate to the Spirit from which they derive their authority, and that whatever is *contrary* to their testimony, is to be rejected as false. But in the warmth of his zeal against these modern revivors of the calumnies put forth by the Buggs, Owens, and Keiths of former days, he did not condescend to stop to make all his own modes of expression secure from attack, or to tell the *whole* truth, further than appeared to him needful for his own purpose, in crushing the position of his antagonists.

A very different antidote to the doctrines of the "Beacon" appeared also in 1835, under the title of "The Light of Christ exalted, or the More Excellent Way briefly set forth," a small book of about sixty-eight pages, by Joseph Sutton, of Manchester. Though this little work was not ostensibly aimed at the "Beacon," but was addressed to the Methodists, with whom the writer had formerly been in connection, yet it furnished a good practical refutation of the fallacious and backsliding views of the author of the "Beacon," was written in a spirit of piety and tenderness, and supported the true doctrines of Friends.

John Harrison, another member of Manchester Meeting, zealous against all innovations, and firm in "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," came forth the next year (1836), with "A Lamp for the Beacon;" showing by many parallel passages, that its erroneous sentiments were but the reiteration of what had in old time been abundantly cast as mire and dirt against our early Friends, by sundry opposers of the truth, and had been again and again refuted by George Fox and others.

In 1836 also, J. J. Gurney entered the list of writers in this controversy, not by opposing the "Beacon," but by attacking the author of "Truth Vindicated." This he did with a portion at least of the same acrimony as the latter had used towards the "Beacon" and its eulogists, and with much more unfairness. His "Strictures on Truth Vindicated," while professing to support *what he called* the doctrines of the Society, did great injustice to the author of "Truth Vindicated," and rather materially promoted than in any wise damaged, the cause of the "Beacon;" inasmuch as he therein showed that he was himself sorrowfully defective in his appreciation of some of the fundamental doctrines of Friends, especially with regard to immediate revelation, and the relative authority of the Scriptures and of the Spirit which gave them forth.

Great disturbance was the result of this controversy throughout the Society in England; and a considerable proportion of the members in Manchester, a very large meeting, being carried away with the new views, formed so powerful a party in that Monthly Meeting, that no effectual check could, for a time, be applied to it by the sound portion of the members. The subject was accordingly brought before the Quarterly Meeting of Lancashire in 1835; which appointed a committee to visit and aid the Monthly Meeting of Hardshaw East, in which Manchester was situated, with a view to the due support of the discipline and testimonies of the Society, and the restoration of unity.

Meantime the controversy spread far beyond the limits of Lancashire Quarterly Meeting, and went on as warmly as ever. Elisha Bates had, during his visit to England

in 1833 and 1834, unmistakably shown his adherence to the novel views, and disposition to promote them; and such was the uneasiness with regard to his proceedings and declarations, on the part of not a few Friends at that time, that the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders declined to grant him the usual clear returning minute, on his leaving for his own country. At the Yearly Meeting in 1835, this fact was brought to notice by John Hodgkin; and so great an outcry arose among his partisans, or sympathizers, that, in order to satisfy them, Josiah Forster proposed that the Select Yearly Meeting should be directed to reconsider the subject. This was done, and under the popular pressure, that meeting was actually induced to transmit to America a clear returning certificate, in contravention of its previous judgment!

In the spring of 1836, Elisha Bates again appeared in England; this time without any credentials, and professedly on the ground of outward business; but in reality with the intent of helping forward the "Beacon" party to the best of his ability. With this view, he almost immediately commenced the publication of his "Miscellaneous Repository" in England, and continued it for several numbers, as a vehicle for his attacks on the ancient landmarks; and in the autumn he went so far in the practical exemplification of his departure from our original principles, as to submit to the ceremony of water-baptism, performed by a certain J. Pye Smith (called "Reverend"), in the neighborhood of London, probably the first instance of the kind in one at the time occupying the station of a minister among Friends. He afterwards, with the egotism which now became a prominent

characteristic of his writings, published several pamphlets in support of his own conduct, and one endeavoring to destroy the religious standing of our early Friends;* and soon left England again for America, having probably found his advocacy of the party more largely drawing on his pecuniary resources than the remuneration warranted.

John Wilkinson and Luke Howard were two other sorrowful instances of ministers who had stood in good esteem, becoming beguiled and carried away in these byways and crooked paths, and through their influence helping forward greatly the sad defection from ancient principles. Both had been conspicuous members of the Society, very much respected by all, and beloved by many, and the former had acted for several years in time past as clerk of London Yearly Meeting.

Luke Howard, an eminent chemist and natural philosopher, and for many years head of the well-known firm of manufacturing chemists, Howard, Jewell & Gibson, near London, was, particularly in his latter days, an eccentric man, though highly esteemed in the community, for his scientific attainments and his general moral worth.

Having relinquished business, and retired into Yorkshire, he published for several years (as an employment for his leisure) a periodical entitled "The Yorkshireman," which furnished a vehicle for some valuable information, and an outlet for some of his strange ideas. When the "Beacon" controversy broke out, he earnestly joined with it in some of its features, published several attacks on the views and practices of Friends, and in

* This was well answered in 1837 by Samuel Tuke, in "A Plea on behalf of George Fox and the early Friends."

1837, after an erratic course, became water-baptized, and was disowned from the Society.

John Wilkinson was in fact one of the earliest and most efficient instruments in stirring up this schism. For several years before it broke out, he had been dissatisfied with some of the doctrines of early Friends, and anxious to bring about a change. This disaffection manifested itself openly in 1832, when he was one of the Committee of Conference on the alterations in the Discipline. Being of an open and candid temperament as a man, not given to evading his real sentiments, and bold in advocating the views he had embraced, particularly against the doctrine of the inward light of Christ as the primary rule of faith and practice, and the Scriptures as a secondary rule—that of the universality and saving efficacy of Divine Grace—the necessity and possibility of freedom from sin in this life, as treated by Barclay and others under the name of Christian Perfection—and also against our well-known principle, that in order to avail ourselves of the precious efficacy of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, we must submit to the purifying operations of his Spirit in our hearts—his ministry became very unsound and burdensome to the living discerning members. Yet for some years much tender forbearance was exercised towards him, and only private admonition extended to him, though of this there appears to have been no little. It is indeed astonishing, that so much forbearance was used, that he was allowed to go on as a minister, spreading abroad views in direct contravention of the fundamental doctrines of the Society, for five or six years, before anything was really done to put a stop to it, otherwise than by private admonition. Even

in 1831, he had excited uneasiness; in 1832 he had explicitly and openly objected, in the Meeting for Sufferings, to some of the doctrines of William Penn and Robert Barclay; and in the Yearly Meeting of 1834, he had expressed his desire that the Scriptures "might be acknowledged among Friends as *the only rule* of faith and practice." This of course produced at the time some alarm, and elicited some opposition, but nothing further was done. Going to Manchester in the autumn of that year, and coming forth as usual in his preaching with some of his views, George Jones and John Harrison, and other friends, expressed to him in letters their dissatisfaction with his ministry. In the twelfth month of 1835, in a meeting at Tottenham, near London, he declared distinctly against the "belief in Christ as an inward principle," designating such a belief as deceptive. On this occasion that worthy minister Thomas Shillitoe, then far advanced in life, and quite infirm, could not remain silent, but is said to have expressed himself as follows: "I feel constrained to say, that if by an '*inward principle*,' is meant the inshining of the light of Christ in the heart, which is his second coming without sin unto salvation, and this is not to be believed in and depended upon, then I am in a most deplorable state! Now, at my advanced age, at this solemn period, and in the prospect of being soon called to stand before the judgment-seat of God, to receive the reward of my works, then where shall I be? And if there is no 'inward principle,' then, for sixty years past, I have been following a 'Jack o' the lantern,' a 'Will o' the wisp!' For it is now more than sixty years since I became acquainted with the principles of this Society. Oh, no!

my friends, the evidence in my mind at this time is, that as I have followed the leading and guidance of this inward principle, this inshining of the light of Christ, it has led me safely along through all the dangers and perils of the way, and will continue to lead me to the end. And it is the chief corner-stone on which I build all my hopes, and shall do to the end of my days; and I crave that during the remainder of my life, nothing I may ever hear, nothing I may ever read, nothing any man may say, may jostle me from off this foundation. And I warn you, to take heed how you receive any other doctrine than this."

A few days afterwards, Thomas Shillitoe, as a true watchman not sleeping at his post, introduced the case into the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders in London, as it was within that quarter that the unsound views had been uttered. The result was that J. Wilkinson received a letter from one of the elders, expostulating with him on the inconsistency of his course as a minister among Friends; and a few days afterwards, as he continued to speak in the same manner, he was requested by four of the elders to keep silence, and a complaint was sent to Friends of his own Monthly Meeting. John now seeing Friends in earnest, and that the course just entered upon was likely to bring matters to a narrow pass, concluded to anticipate the regular action of discipline, and accordingly sent in to his Monthly Meeting a letter resigning his membership in the Society. The next year he published his reasons for leaving Friends, in a scurrilous attack on the Society (containing many oft refuted charges brought up anew), in a work of about 500 pages, entitled, "Quakerism Examined."

The author of "Truth Vindicated" was not to be so easily silenced by the authority of name or rank, or by the self-assumed weight of "*magister ipse dixit*," without the support of truth, as J. J. Gurney seemed to have imagined. He soon published a reply to J. J. Gurney's "Strictures," entitled "Early Friends and Modern Professors," a book of about 150 pages, 12mo., in which he brought clear argument and ample evidence, from the writings of our early Friends, to sustain his own positions, and to fasten upon J. J. Gurney, in an incontestable manner, the charge of unfair misrepresentation of his former work, and of palpable unsoundness in regard to some of the fundamental doctrines of the Society. He also cleared himself from imputations to which certain lax modes of expression in the "Truth Vindicated" had somewhat exposed him; and showed beyond reasonable dispute, that if J. J. Gurney had *truly* charged his book with "*infidelity*," our most cherished writers were no less liable to the awful charge.* This reply indeed sent forth a fatal stroke against J. J. Gurney's pretensions to soundness in the principles of Friends, and it seems that he was never able to gainsay or parry the scorching allegations. He remained silent, at least, so far as the press was concerned.

In the Yearly Meeting of London, in the fifth month, 1835, the disunity in Lancashire Quarterly Meeting was brought into view; and Josiah Forster proposed the appointment of a committee to extend care and assistance,

* The same writer (Henry Martin) also published, in 1835 and 1837, two pamphlets, entitled, "A Defence of the Original Principles of the Society of Friends," No. 1 and No. 2; and, in 1836, "A Letter to John Wilkinson."

alleging that the publication of the "Beacon" was the origin of the disunity existing. A committee was already under appointment by that Quarterly Meeting, on the same subject. Luke Howard now opposed the appointment of any committee by the Yearly Meeting. Joseph John Gurney expressed his approval of the sentiments of the "Beacon" on the subject of the atonement, but believed it was defective and incorrect respecting the universality of the Light of Christ, and the influence of the Spirit; but he "still more highly disapproved of Dr. Hancock's reply" ["Defence"], and objected to this author having made "references to Barclay, rather than to the Holy Scriptures." In the discussion which ensued, it appeared that the Monthly Meeting of Hardshaw East (Manchester, etc.) had not taken any steps against the author of the "Beacon;" but the appointment of the above-mentioned committee by the Quarterly Meeting was considered as having this purpose in view, and was therefore looked upon by some as improperly overstepping the functions of the Monthly Meeting, although its object in reality was to assist the sound members of that meeting in the maintenance of the discipline. J. J. Gurney "raised a point of discipline" on this, "in favor of his dear friend," the author of the "Beacon," and proposed that Lancashire Quarterly Meeting should be directed to discharge their committee, "and to suspend all further proceedings against" the book or its author, in order to prevent "incalculable mischief" by the proceedings being allowed to go on. He repeated his desire that "for the cause of harmony alone" all further proceedings should be stopped; apparently ignoring the fact, that the fun-

damental doctrines of the Society were at stake in allowing that book and others of the same stamp to continue to circulate among its members unrebuked. In what Josiah Forster afterwards said on the subject, he appeared to urge the appointment of a committee, as much with a view to stop Thomas Hancock's "Defence," as to check the circulation of the "Beacon."* The discussion of the subject, being resumed the next day, resulted in the appointment of a committee of thirteen members, viz.: Barnard Dickinson, Edward Pease, George Richardson, Samuel Tuke, Edward Ash, Josiah Forster, William Forster, George Stacey, Joseph Tatham, Joseph Marriage, William Allen, Peter Bedford, and Joseph John Gurney.

Looking over these eminent names, we can scarcely fail to perceive, that in regard to the all-important matter of doctrines, the committee was composed of very discordant materials; but we may also apprehend that two men such as J. J. Gurney and Edward Ash, who must have known that if the doctrines of the Beacon were censured, their own writings would share the same blame, would be likely at least to neutralize any attempt to come forth openly and unreservedly in support of our ancient principles. There were some men upon that nomination warmly attached to the primitive faith, so far as their education and associations had made them acquainted with it, and some who went deeper than education or association; but who could not bring their minds to a resolution openly to encounter the overwhelm-

* See a "Report of the Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting," 1835. Published by John Stephens, Fleet Street; pages 6 and 7.

ing influence of J. J. Gurney and his many admirers. So that when we consider his well-known position, and that of Edward Ash in the same direction, and add to this the shrewdness and sophistry of Isaac Crewdson, we may easily account for the very weak, inconsistent, and faltering manner in which the whole subject proved to be treated by the committee, and the great damage thus done to the Society by their means. J. J. Gurney at once took the helm, and directed and controlled their proceedings in such a way as to shield himself from the censure which must have fallen upon him, if the "Beacon's" doctrines had been openly and clearly denounced.

The whole committee met in Lancashire at the Quarterly Meeting in the sixth month, 1835, and began a long series of blunders by acceding, under certain unworthy restrictions upon Isaac Crewdson, to his demand that *all* their observations to him respecting the "Beacon" should be *in writing*, after coming to a deliberate *joint conclusion* on its various parts. They furnished him, accordingly, with a statement of objections to the work, but desired him to take no copy, keep the document strictly in his own possession, and return it to them at their next meeting. According to his desire also (for he seems to have dictated to the committee his own terms for their treatment of the case), they confined themselves to what were termed "Scriptural" objections; thus opening a wide field for controversy, instead of going at once to the mark, and showing that his publication was palpably at variance, on certain fundamental subjects, with the always acknowledged doctrines of the body of which he was a member and a minister. This would have been the strong ground, and clear of contro-

versy; but in abandoning it, they laid themselves open to great difficulties, and gave him many opportunities of sophistical reasoning, in a discussion, the end of which none could foresee. Such a thing as the supposition of a discordance between the acknowledged doctrines of the Society and those of Scripture, ought not to have been allowed to be considered or treated as an open question, between members of that Society. Between the Society and other professors, it would have been the reverse. All professing Christian sects bring Scripture, as they understand it, to prove the correctness of their tenets; but to prove that any one of their members is sound or unsound in his doctrines *as a member* of any Society, he must be judged by the Scriptures *as always accepted* and interpreted *by that Society*. The committee thus at once gave away the ground on which they ought to have taken a firm and immovable stand; which could *afterwards* have been amply sustained from Holy Scripture.*

The committee commenced their statement by an earnest endeavor to prove to I. Crewdson that they were not Hicksites; and in their zeal to do this, they over-

* Edward Ash, the only surviving member of that committee in 1870, published in the London "Friend" of the ninth month, that year, a statement of their proceedings in regard to the "Beacon," as a record of the case according to his view of it. He says (p. 208), "A Friend in the station of Minister made an earnest appeal to the committee, to judge the 'Beacon' by Barclay's Apology. After a very brief interchange of opinion, it was unanimously resolved to do no such thing, but to try it by the Holy Scriptures alone." The individual here alluded to, is believed, on satisfactory evidence, to have been that worthy man, Alexander Dirkin, formerly of Wilmington, Delaware, who died in England.

stepped the mark of Quakerism, by adopting one of J. J. Gurney's expressions respecting the Holy Scriptures; declaring that they "are *the* appointed instrument for making known to mankind that divine plan of grace and salvation through Jesus Christ and Him crucified, to which they bear so clear a testimony." Here was a mode of speech, which, being susceptible of a double meaning, was outwardly true, but inwardly and essentially false; and appears to have been employed by those who in the committee secured its adoption, to cover up the truth, that grace and salvation by Christ come to mankind immediately, from the Most High, although the mere outward "knowledge of *the plan*" may be said to be made known through the Scriptures. But, is it possible, that there were no men in that committee who could see and withstand the illusory nature of these expressions, knowing that the literal "knowledge of the plan" is one thing, but the practical experience of the inward efficacy of true religion is quite another thing; and that though the former, when rightly applied to us by the Spirit, is to our help, comfort, and instruction, yet the latter is what the soul must depend upon for life and salvation?

This was a giving way in a fundamental point, of which Isaac Crewdson did not fail afterwards freely to take advantage. If they had said "*an* appointed instrument," no inconsistency would have attended it; but to call the Bible "*the* appointed instrument," surely implies that there is no other. And though the word "plan" is artfully introduced to save the phrase, the idea intended to be conveyed undoubtedly was, that the Bible was *the* appointed means of grace and salvation through Christ; to the setting aside of the great

doctrine of our early Friends, that the inward Light of the Lord Jesus by the work of His Spirit in the soul, is the great teacher and leader to the true and saving knowledge of God, and that the Scriptures are subordinate, though a blessed and very important adjunct, or coagent in the work of instruction, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.

After this, they took pains to discard any "*over-strained views* of the precious doctrine of the inward light, as if this light was to be expected to bring men to a knowledge of the incarnation and sacrifice of Christ;" but they entirely omitted to state, that salvation may be obtained even without the advantage of that outward knowledge of facts, by an inward experience of the efficacy thereof. It is true that afterwards they speak of the Scriptures not being "the *only* channel through which He operates for the conversion and salvation of men;" but they speak of it as men who were afraid to speak out, hinting at "divine visitations" and "gracious impressions," but by no means advocating the great doctrine of the Universal and Saving Light of Christ, as stated by our primitive writers, and owned since by all faithful Friends. And in the very next article, they adopt the actual words of the "Beacon," acknowledging that, "We willingly accede to the proposition, that through the Scriptures 'we obtain the knowledge of God's holy law' (Beacon, p. 42), because that law is plainly declared and *unfolded, in all its particulars*, in the volume of inspiration." This, however, which is nearly J. J. Gurney's own words elsewhere, they here somewhat qualify, by adding, "Yet we wish to remark, that the law of God is not *made known to us* by the

written revelation *alone*." Their whole advocacy, however, of this point, is exceedingly faltering and vacillating, and though in some parts of it they endeavor to make an appearance of not being willing to abandon it, yet in their summing up of the objections to the Beacon near the close of their statement, they again speak of the Scriptures as "*the* great appointed channel of the Christian revelation." While they charge the author of the "Beacon" with speaking of the "Inward Light" as a "delusive notion," and say that he denounces it "as the theory of an infidel," and alludes to the doctrine of the "anointing" in "disrespectful terms," and show that he is herein entirely in error, yet soon afterwards they say, "We entirely acquit the author of the Beacon of any intention to speak against the Holy Ghost." And though besides all this, they plainly show that his remarks tend to depreciate our views respecting silent worship and the gift of gospel ministry, yet they conclude their statement with this remarkable avowal: "We would not have him sacrifice one particle of his testimony to the Truth as it is in Jesus;" as if he was still really bearing a living testimony to that truth, while promulgating views directly tending to undermine it!

If we consider the wavering nature of this statement of the committee altogether, we need not be surprised to find, that in their subsequent proceedings, when pressed by Is. Crewdson's exposure of their weakness, and by the sophistical attacks wherewith he strove to turn it to his own account, they were put to their wits' end to contrive ground to stand upon without further compromising their own position. In saying this, I do not wish

by any means to deny that many of their objections and arguments against the "Beacon" were undoubtedly sound and good; (the better element gaining at times a temporary ascendency in the committee); and I can cordially indorse the following expressions, with a regret that they had not more fully sustained them throughout: "When we remember that the influence of God's Holy Spirit on the mind of man is the source of all saving knowledge of divine truth, the spring of faith and holiness, of life and immortality, we ought surely to refrain from restricting its true extent as it relates to others, and to cherish it for ourselves with humble gratitude as our dearest treasure."

At their second visit, in the eighth month, Is. Crewdson presented a reply to their statement, in which he made a general plausible defence of the "Beacon," congratulating the committee on their very scriptural views, and artfully expressing his satisfaction that there was "so much accordance" between their statements of Christian doctrines and his own sentiments. He endeavored to explain away his attack on the doctrine of the "inward light," by alleging that it was levelled at Hicks's view of the doctrine; but he made no attempt to show what were the views of faithful Friends on that great subject, in contradistinction with those expressed by Elias Hicks; and though he cannot have been ignorant that "the inward light" is a term constantly used by Friends to designate the enlightening operations of the Spirit of Christ in the soul, he denied that his aspersions thereon had any application to the "Scripture doctrine" of the Holy Spirit. But what he had in view by what he called the "Scripture doctrine of the Holy Spirit," as he

explained it in three brief paragraphs specially introduced for the purpose, seems to be very far short of that doctrine as always held in the Society, and indicates the Scriptures, after all, as *the source* of what the Holy Spirit is to apply. His reply, as a whole, was an affectionately couched appeal to their feelings, and while firmly holding his own position, was well calculated to convey an impression that there was but little difference between them.

To this reply the committee answered in writing, and with good reason, that, in issuing such a warning as the "Beacon" against the errors of Elias Hicks, the author ought to have made clear distinctions, for the reader, as to what dangers he was aiming at, by showing wherein the doctrines of Friends were departed from or misrepresented by Hicks. But while they still exhorted the author to suppress the circulation of the "Beacon," on account of its "manifest tendency," they yet avowed themselves "considerably relieved by the explanation which he" had "given them of his views on some points of Christian doctrine."

It would be tedious and unprofitable to follow in detail the desultory controversy which ensued. The committee, as a body, do not appear to have known clearly the difference between really sound doctrine and his sophistical representations.

They again attended Lancashire Quarterly Meeting, held at Liverpool, in the twelfth month; and it appears, by a printed account of what occurred at that meeting,*

* See the "Christian Advocate;" London, twelfth month 28th, 1835, page 414.

that more was said by the committee against "Truth Vindicated," than against the "Beacon." Josiah Forster designated the former as "a very pernicious work," and even Samuel Tuke (if the account is to be trusted) spoke of its "dangerous tendency."

On the 12th of that month, Isaac Crewdson presented to the committee at Manchester a document of considerable length. He now with great acuteness took up the committee's own words and admissions, and made use of them to his own advantage to such a degree, that the committee must have felt as if enwrapped by a web of their own materials—their own weak statements and needless concessions. He quoted also a part of a letter written to him by one of their number (J. J. Gurney), speaking with much approbation and satisfaction of certain features in the "Beacon," especially on the Atonement and Justification, as "excellent," and many of the author's remarks as "in accordance with the sentiments of every sound and enlightened Christian." After this, Isaac Crewdson reasoned with the committee on the supposed consequences of suppressing such a book as the "Beacon;" and, professing to have satisfied all their objections, demanded that they should either come forward with whatever they had further to object to, or give him a clear acquittal.

The committee must have been in a pitiable strait to know how to get out of such an entanglement. But at the Monthly Meeting, held on the 24th of the twelfth month, they made a report of their proceedings. In this report they informed the meeting of their labors with the author of the "Beacon," and his various replies to their objections; quoting many of his professions of unity with their

views, as if they really did believe that in the main he was sound in the faith of Friends. They expressed their "satisfaction in the evidence" thus afforded, hollow as it was, of his "general accordance of sentiment in matters of doctrine" with the Society. But still thinking that his "mode of writing" regarding the "inward light" was calculated to unsettle the minds of the young and inexperienced, and that "the bearing and tendency of the work" were opposed to our views of the spirituality of the gospel, and finding that he had not complied with their advice to suppress the further circulation of the "Beacon," they gave their judgment, that "the publication of the 'Beacon' did furnish a ground of disunity with its author, on the part of the Meeting of Ministers and Elders of this Monthly Meeting;" but added, that they did "not feel called upon, with reference to the *doctrinal* question, to recommend to the Monthly Meeting to take any proceedings in the case!"

A day or two afterwards, they delivered a note to Isaac Crewdson, recommending him to "refrain from speaking" in meetings for worship, and to "discontinue his attendance of meetings for ministers and elders." Where they obtained by the discipline any authority thus to usurp the functions of the Monthly Meeting and Meeting of Ministers and Elders, has, so far as I know, never been shown. But the Monthly Meeting advised him to comply with the admonition. He was thus displaced as a minister. For a few months he remained pretty much silent, and further proceedings in his case seem to have been suspended, the "Beacon" nevertheless circulating as freely as ever. But during the summer of 1836, it appears that he frequently spoke again

in the line of ministry, being probably encouraged to it by his adherents. Whereupon in the ninth month, 1836, the committee thought it their duty to inform the Monthly Meeting of the state of the case. At the Monthly Meeting in the tenth month, Isaac Crewdson complained sorely of the injustice which he thought had been exercised towards him, and presented a written protest, desiring that it should be entered on the records of the meeting. During the discussion which ensued, much excitement was manifested, insomuch that it is said that at one time thirteen individuals were endeavoring to speak simultaneously.

In view of the novel and irregular nature of such a proceeding, after great difficulty and much time spent, it was finally concluded not to record the protest.

The proceedings of the committee in this case from first to last, appear to have been of an extraordinary character, and but poorly calculated either to heal the breach, or to enable the church to clear itself, by a decided testimony against the new views circulated by the "Beacon" and otherwise. And to make the matter worse, and compromise the whole body still more in a departure from ancient principles, the Yearly Meeting of London, during this year, 1836, had issued an epistle, containing expressions respecting the Scriptures, well known to have been indited by J. J. Gurney, and probably intended to meet the adherents of the "Beacon," on one important point at least, on their own terms. This epistle designated the "sacred volume, as *the only* divinely authorized record of the doctrines of true religion;" and declared that "there can be no appeal from them [the Scriptures] to any other authority whatever,"

they "being *the* appointed means of making known to us the blessed truths of Christianity," and "the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound as Christians to believe, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions."

But the conduct of the case of Isaac Crewdson in the hands of this committee, in various particulars throughout, can scarcely be said to have been in accordance with the discipline of the Society. Passing by their having entirely refrained from an open and unmistakable advocacy of the real doctrines of Friends which were involved, thus placing themselves in a wrong position and weakening all their proceedings, the regularity of their mode of procedure in dealing with Isaac Crewdson is open to much question. If the question in regard to him as an individual had been primarily, whether his *ministry* was sound or unsound, the matter ought to have been opened, and if possible settled, in his own meeting of ministers and elders—if *necessary*, with the assistance of the committee (or rather perhaps of the committee of the *Quarterly* Meeting, whose functions this committee had suspended)—and thence taken to the Monthly Meeting for its conclusion, as to the suspension of his ministry. But this was not the question in a primary sense. The question rightly before the committee was the alleged unsoundness of the "Beacon," producing disunity in the meeting. On this subject, strange to tell, they gave their judgment to the Monthly Meeting, acknowledging that they had no charge to bring against its author, *respecting doctrines*, claiming any action by the meeting. Yet they held on to him, nevertheless, as a delinquent in some way, from his *mode of writing*, and the main *ten-*

dency of his book; and without any *other* given ground for it, recommended his suspension from the *ministry!* No doubt he ought to have been suspended from the ministry; but this should have been done in a manner authorized by the discipline and practice of the Society. And his case should have been introduced to the Preparative Meeting, and thence to the Monthly Meeting, as in all other cases of delinquency, on the ground of his publishing, and persisting in the circulation of a book, at variance with the acknowledged doctrines of the Society, and calculated to lay them waste.

Isaac Crewdson had already presented to the committee, early in the ninth month, a supplement to his reply to their objections, or as he entitled it when printed as a pamphlet, his "Defence of the Beacon;" a paper of considerable length, making about sixty printed 12mo. pages. In this paper he came forth more boldly than before with evidences of his divergence from the doctrines of early Friends; and while firmly holding his former position, he spoke in the tone of an injured man, closely expostulating with the committee on the very inadequate grounds on which, as he thought, they had condemned him. Making constant use of the committee's weak and erroneous admission that the Bible is "*the* appointed instrument," etc., by which they had placed themselves in a false position, and which had now been indorsed by the Yearly Meeting, in terms, if anything, rather stronger, he worked upon it in various ways, to show that his own statements were in accordance with it; rejoicing, as he said, "to find that, upon this cardinal point," his own views and those of the committee were "so entirely alike." Yet he did not hesi-

tate to show them that their mutual views were entirely at variance with the doctrines of Robert Barclay, which he designated as an "*unscriptural* and *mischievous* theory," and "in the highest degree *delusive*." He spoke of "the written word" as "the Gospel," and of this being identical with "the ingrafted word" (James 1 : 21), which he ought to have remembered the apostle says "is able to save your souls." He declared that this Gospel (written or preached) is "the power of God unto salvation," tauntingly adding that it was "as it is well expressed by the committee, 'THE *appointed instrument*,' or as it is equally well expressed by the Society in its last Yearly Epistle, 'THE appointed *means*,'" etc., thus locking their fetters with the keys which they themselves had put in his hands. After this he reminded them, that he had been "informed in full committee (at least when twelve [of thirteen] were present), that your sentiments—*were not* in accordance with Barclay's unscriptural theory, the *Vehiculum Dei*."* How could *some* of the committee sit still and let such a declaration be made in their name? He called "the inward light"—without any Hicks this time to hang an excuse upon—a "mischievous phraseology," and afterwards "the fallacious theory," and "the root of Hicksism." He called the committee to account for venturing in a few instances to hint very gently at what our ancient Friends had or had not held, reminding them again of the declaration of the Yearly Meeting, respecting the Bible being *the only* record and test. Indeed, he never seemed to have had

* Why should any be so alarmed at these two Latin words, used by Barclay out of condescension to the schoolmen, and simply meaning the vehicle, or entrance into the soul of the Spirit of the Lord

enough, in making his own use of these admissions of the committee and of the Yearly Meeting. They appear to have been devised especially to help him to stand his ground. In defending his application of 1 John 5 : 10, "because he believed not the *record* that God gave of his Son," he seemed to be unaware that the word rendered *record* in this place, is μαρτυρίαν (testimony), and the verb translated *gave* is μεμαρτύρηκεν (hath testified), so that the expression by no means necessarily implies a written record. He objected to the "*scruple* which [he said] many friends *have had*, to calling the Scriptures *the word of God*," and repeatedly applied that term to the Bible in this document. He reminded them again of the commendations of the "Beacon," which he had received in a letter from "one of the most distinguished members of *your own body*" (Joseph J. Gurney), quoting it freely and ostentatiously; and concluded by closely appealing to the committee, now to determine whether they had, "in any one instance," proved from Scripture that he had "infringed on Divine Truth, the truth of the Bible."

To this remarkable document, a short note was sent in reply by the committee, without signature; saying that they did "not consider it to be incumbent upon them to enter into any detailed notice" of the manuscript, but that they did "not consider their scriptural objections to the 'Beacon' to be removed;" and complaining of certain unfair "insinuations" which they thought the author had advanced against them. They endeavored to show their own soundness on the points involved in these insinuations; and concluded by asserting that they felt it to be "a sacred duty, steadfastly to

maintain those truly scriptural views of the spirituality of the Christian religion, which appear more peculiarly to distinguish our religious body in the church of Christ; views which, in the present day, are in evident danger of being grievously undermined." If they saw this in reality, why had they not once come forth with a clear statement and defence of those views, which were in such "evident danger of being undermined," and which were in fact then being undermined by some of their own number, if not by their own *joint* pusillanimity in pretending to defend them and yet frittering them away? Would that they had more faithfully acted up to this "sacred duty," in their treatment of this extraordinary case! The Society might thus have been spared many a bitter pang since that day, in the wholesale departure of its meetings and members from its original and fundamental principles and practices.*

In addition to the case of the "Beacon," the committee had also under its care that of William Boulton, an appointed Elder of Manchester Monthly Meeting, but who at times spoke in the line of ministry. He had been for several years prominent in the way of holding bible-studying meetings in his house, and in various other measures promoting the views advocated in the "Beacon." In the treatment of his case, the committee

* The views here brought forward, relative to the position and action of the committee, and the results on the whole Society consequent on their vacillating course, have since been greatly confirmed by statements of Edward Ash in an article in the London "Friend," of ninth month, 1870, above alluded to, and a reply thereto, signed D., in the "British Friend" of eleventh month 1st, 1870.

manifested the same weakness as in that of I. Crewdson, and an unwarrantable evasiveness in regard to the true reasons for their action. They promptly desired him to desist from speaking as a minister, but without, as far as appears by the accounts, showing how this was connected with his bible-teachings; afterwards they recommended him to refrain from attending the meetings of ministers and elders, of which he was assistant clerk; and then to withdraw his membership in that Select Meeting; and all this (as he told them himself without apparent contradiction), without giving him any clear reason for such important advice. There may have been in private, extenuating circumstances to explain this reticence of the committee, but if so, they ought to have been made known.

But it is time to hasten to the conclusion of this unhappy affair. I believe it is safe to say, that never before was a schism so terribly mismanaged in the Society of Friends. The very measures which they took to suppress or to heal it, served but to fasten the seeds of it firmly within the body at large, to break forth with accumulated force at a future day.

It would seem that the Monthly Meeting's straight course of action in the support of the discipline, was at this time impeded, if not entirely frustrated, by having those under the appointment of Overseers who were mainly favorable to the new views.

In the tenth month, the subject was taken up for consideration, whether the time had not arrived for a new nomination, many years having elapsed since the last appointment. Great opposition was made to it by the party of the "Beacon," who, as the committee of the

Yearly Meeting, incorporated into the Monthly Meeting, might have a controlling influence in the nomination, saw in the measure a blast to their hopes of carrying the whole meeting to their own purposes, and instead of this a probability of being themselves before long brought under the action of the discipline. Feelings ran high, and the meeting was greatly disturbed; but a committee was eventually appointed to consider of a new nomination.

As mentioned before, Isaac Crewdson had delivered to the Monthly Meeting a protest against their proceedings, and after much discussion the meeting declined to enter such a paper on its records. This gave his party great offence, and at an adjourned meeting on the 28th of the month, forty-eight male members produced another protest, against this decision of the meeting. The reading of this protest was of course strongly opposed, as irregular and contrary to all former practice in the Society, and a dangerous precedent for the future administration of the discipline. William Nield, who had this paper in charge to read to the meeting, showed a fixed determination not to be defeated in his intention. After much time spent in the discussion, he changed his ground to some extent, in order to get it in one shape or other before the meeting; saying that he would read it as *his own*, leaving out the names of the other signers. This also was strenuously opposed, but at length J. J. Gurney suggested that the question should be left for the clerk and the friend to settle between them! This amounted to a consent, for the clerk had already shown himself favorable to its being read. But as J. J. Gurney was the author of the suggestion, it met with but slight

obstruction, and Nield soon proceeded to read the protest, changing the plural pronouns for the first person singular. As this paper protested against the proceedings of the previous Monthly Meeting in the case of I. Crewdson, alleging that those proceedings were oppressive and not according to the regular order of the discipline (which the weakness of the committee had given too much ground for asserting), the whole subject was thereby reopened to debate, without any hope of profit to either party; and J. J. Gurney came forward with a long but lame apology for the manner in which the committee had acted throughout. The Monthly Meeting was then adjourned to the 31st, when William Boulton introduced his own case, in order to show the injustice of his being advised by the committee to withdraw from the meeting of ministers and elders, without any specific charge brought against him, but only on the broad assertion by the committee, that as there was *disunity* in that meeting, it would be advisable for *him* to withdraw, and to refrain from speaking in the line of ministry! From the documents which he produced, it did not appear that any attempt had been made to convince him that his own inconsistency with the ancient principles and practices of the Society was one cause of the disunity; though verbal attempts of this kind in private conversation *may* have been made, without appearing in the written advice given to him from time to time. He now demanded the *true reasons* for their course towards him, saying that he was utterly ignorant of them. Great discussions ensued, and several adjournments were consumed in empty debate. The committee not only displayed the same weakness as in the case of I. Crewdson,

in regard to a firm and clear advocacy of our essential doctrines, but in order to avoid this, and the necessity of a plain statement of the real facts of the case, their conduct was characterized by a degree of shuffling and evasiveness entirely unworthy of their characters as men, and reproachful to the cause which they professed to be sustaining.*

When the meeting finally decided to accept William Boulton's withdrawal from the station of an Elder, he came forth with an elaborate address to the Monthly Meeting, in which he certainly expressed many undeniable truths, but without appearing to be aware that they turned most palpably against himself. One very especial truth he uttered, which the committee might well apply to their own action: "Every effort to conceal the real character of this evil, only prevents the application of the remedy." Alas, he apprehended not truly either the evil or the remedy, but (whatever may have been his candor) his own words evinced that he was far from the standard of true Quakerism. The committee must have known, that in his expressed sentiments, as well as in practical conduct, he was not in accordance with true Friends; but they dared not to advance on that ground, being conscious that some of their own body were at least equally liable to be called to account.

At the adjourned Monthly Meeting held eleventh month 1st, the committee undertook to restore to their functions the committee of the *Quarterly* Meeting, by introducing it formally into the Monthly Meeting.

* See "Crisis of the Quaker Contest in Manchester," 1837, throughout.

They had apparently been afraid to trust it with the case of the "Beacon," or with that of William Boulton; but *now* they were willing it should do what it might be able to do, to stop the disunity which they had so inefficiently attempted to check. To this, however, the clerk strenuously objected, alleging that such an "interposition" of the Quarterly Meeting's committee would "effectually destroy the independence of the Monthly Meeting," and declaring that he could not conscientiously remain as clerk, "to record the edicts of that body." Much opposition being made to the measure, the committee consented, not to "introduce" the Quarterly Meeting's committee until the other business of this month should be gone through. The meeting then proceeded to the appointment of fresh overseers, as nominated by a committee previously appointed. This also met with great opposition.

At the adjournment on the 2d of eleventh month, two female elders, the wives of I. Crewdson and William Boulton, resigned their stations in the Select Meeting, which was accepted. It would appear by various statements in the printed accounts of this memorable Monthly Meeting (accounts which, though published by the Beacon party, have, so far as I know, never had their veracity as a narrative of the facts brought in question), that the business was very far from being conducted in that weighty and waiting frame of spirit which has always been considered necessary, in regard to the business of the church, as well as in our meetings for divine worship. At the next adjournment, the clerk "*announced* that George Stacey *was in possession* of the meeting." George Stacey accordingly came forward, and

read a document from the committee of the Yearly Meeting, in reference to the meetings held in Manchester, for Scripture reading in connection with "vocal exercises in the way of exhortation and prayer;" which being unauthorized were considered by the committee an unsafe innovation. The members of the Beacon party opposed this document with much warmth. They were evidently preparing for a separation, and allowed themselves greater liberty of expression against the committee than heretofore. The document was received, but does not seem to have elicited any action at that time. At the conclusion of this sitting, Joseph Crosfield resigned his position as clerk, and then the Quarterly Meeting's committee was formally introduced.

The separation of the Beacon party began in earnest at the next Monthly Meeting, the 10th of eleventh month, by letters of resignation of membership tendered by twenty-eight members. A month afterwards twenty others pursued the same course. These were held under consideration, and at the Monthly Meeting held on the 8th of twelfth month, a committee was appointed to visit those who had resigned their membership. On the 15th of the same month, this committee made a feeling report of their labors; and the resignations, with a few exceptions, were then accepted, including I. Crewdson, William Boulton, and their connections and adherents. Thus the Society allowed the author of the "Beacon" to depart, without issuing any testimony to clear the church from his errors.*

* Even in his letter of resignation, accepted by the meeting, he charged Robert Barclay with unsoundness of doctrine, and George Fox with "assumptions" of a "blasphemous character!"

These persons set up a separate association, styling themselves "Evangelical Friends;" and being joined by others of the same views about Bristol and in other parts of England, they held a meeting in London in 1837, and issued a public Address, after the manner of a Yearly Meeting Epistle. But they did not stop there. Many of them submitted to water-baptism, after the example set by Elisha Bates. Some partook of the bread and wine and joined the Episcopalians; some went to the "Plymouth Brethren" or to other societies; and in a few years their organization as a distinct body disappeared. The leaven, however, which had promoted this effervescence in the Society, still continued to work. No check was put to the numerous publications of J. J. Gurney, Edward Ash, and others of kindred opinions, notwithstanding the earnest expostulations of the Meeting for Sufferings in Philadelphia, warning Friends in England of the dangers to be apprehended from allowing unsound works to be freely circulated through the Society, written by its own members.

Beaconism, as such, and before the arrival of J. J. Gurney in this land, did not make much open headway in America. It showed itself a little in New England, but though the leaven remained, its spread there received a check, for the time, in a remarkable manner. I believe the following account to be substantially correct, having heard the circumstance related by divers friends of New England, who appeared to be perfectly familiar therewith, and were intimately acquainted with the parties concerned.

Seth and Mary Davis had for some time the superintendence of the Yearly Meeting's boarding-school at

Providence, in Rhode Island. William Almy, of that city, a very wealthy and influential man, in the station of a minister, had great control of the school, as a prominent member of the committee charged with its management. He had been endeavoring to promote the introduction of the doctrines of the "Beacon" party into New England, and was now engaged in an attempt to bring the book into the library of the school. This attempt, Seth and Mary Davis, sound in the ancient faith of the Society, firmly withstood; and as William Almy could brook no opposition to what he had undertaken, he determined on compassing their dismissal. One morning his worthy father-in-law, Moses Brown, a well-known and faithful elder of many years' standing for the truth, then very far advanced in age (aged about ninety-seven at that time), and much crippled in body, though clear and firm in his mental and spiritual faculties, and thoroughly alive to his son's unsoundness, came to the school, and informed the superintendents, with great grief, of William Almy's determination with regard to them; adding that, in order to accomplish his intention of getting rid of them, he had called a special meeting of the committee for that morning, and that with the view of avoiding the presence of his father-in-law, who he knew would oppose such a scheme, he had appointed it to be held in the third story of the building. "Now," said the worthy old man, "I see not how I am to attend the committee, for I cannot walk up those stairs." "But we will help thee up," replied Seth Davis and his wife; and accordingly, placing their valued ancient friend in a chair, they carried him up to the third story, and there he sat until the appointed hour. The mem-

bers of the committee assembled according to the call; but William Almy did not appear among them. After sitting for some time, a message came for Dr. Toby, one of the committee, to the effect that his presence was required, as William Almy had been taken sick. Some time afterwards, William Jenkins, son-in-law to William Almy, received a similar summons; and finally, another message came to Moses Brown, that William Almy was very ill. He died, I believe, that day. The object of the committee's meeting was thus frustrated by this sudden and awful dispensation. This was in the second month, 1836.

Elisha Bates also, of Ohio, as we have already seen, had imbibed the views of the Beacon party, after having for many years been an acceptable and well-qualified minister among Friends. But it does not appear that he succeeded to any great extent in imbuing the minds of Friends in his own Yearly Meeting with the same sentiments. He had been an eloquent preacher, and very serviceable while he abode in humility and the true fear of the Lord; but of later time becoming exalted in his estimate of his own powers, he often launched forth into flowery and showy discourses, delighting much in the facility with which he could bring forward the most beautiful and sublime passages of Holy Scripture, especially in regard to our Lord Jesus Christ; but the deeply spiritual views of our Society respecting the inward work of the Spirit of Christ for our sanctification and daily instruction, became more and more lost sight of in his discourses. He let into his mind also feelings of jealousy in regard to certain friends, who did not unite with some of his favorite plans; so that when he

went to England, his mind was in a state of preparation to receive readily the insinuations of the Beacon party. But after this, his course became so rapid and unmistakable in its tendency out from Friends, that his influence in America sunk almost at once upon the fact of his water-baptism becoming known; and eventually he went among the Methodists.

The floating unsettlement of mind which these novel views produced in many of the members in England, was very great and disastrous. It is well exemplified in the following narration.*

. . . "To subvert the orthodox doctrines, as held by George Fox and his cotemporaries, was the object of Isaac Crewdson and his adherents; and to achieve it, Friends in many meetings were weekly furnished with printed extracts from the early writers of the Society. Some of these were garbled—a word, or words, being left out, or added in parenthesis, materially altering the sense. One of these was sent to me, directed by the hand of a Friend of our meeting at Exeter, beloved by very many of his friends for his kindliness of disposition and practical benevolence. Not content with sending these extracts weekly into almost every house of Friends belonging to Exeter particular meeting, he made visits to denounce the early Friends as fanatics. A visit from this dear friend to me lasted three-quarters of an hour; when he inveighed most vehemently against the early Friends and their doctrines, finishing by these awful and remarkable words, viz.: 'I hesitate not to say that

* See "The Friend," Philadelphia, second month 1st, 1873. Taken from the "British Friend."

the doctrines of the early Friends are nothing short of the delusions of the devil!'

"A pause of several minutes ensued, doubtless to give me an opportunity of replying or making a remark, either in favor of his assertions or the reverse. I could have said something, much, for my heart was full and sorely grieved; but the *restraining* power was put upon me by the Lord's Holy Spirit. I was not permitted to utter one syllable. I sat silent; and then this dear friend again addressed me, fearing he had offended me; told me his motive was to rescue me from spiritual death and consequent ruin of my soul. I simply told him I was not offended; he took hold of my hand, and bade me an affectionate farewell. The next day he called again, and evidently was much dissatisfied with himself on calmly reflecting on all he had said. I did not feel forbidden to say something to him then. The substance of my words was, as well as I can recollect: 'My friend, I believe thou did not mean to offend me by thy language yesterday; thou hast not offended me; but I am grieved indeed, that one naturally so kind should express himself as thou hast done towards the worthies of a brighter day than this, and call in question what thou wast taught in thy youth, and professed until lately, whether thou believed it or not.' We ever after remained and met in *social* good will, but the religious bond was severed. I watched him for years, straying from one mountain to another. He left, as might be expected, the Society of Friends, and joined the 'Plymouth brethren,' having unity with them for a good while—met them in breaking of bread, preached among

them, and seemed to have found an ark of refuge in communion with the 'saints.' But eventually he became dissatisfied, and went to the Wesleyan body, to find food for his unsatisfied soul. For a time he rested [there], but here he did not remain. Strange to say, he who proclaimed in town and in the country, by wayside and on the seashore, 'the unsearchable riches of Christ,'—told of the great atonement on Calvary, of the Lamb slain for the sins of mankind, of the efficacy of that blood to cleanse sinners from *all* defilement,—should, by some new light he thought he had received, go to the Unitarians and receive their doctrine—to what extent I cannot say, for there are degrees even in this way—but in this profession of religious belief he was found when the angel of death was sent to hover over his dwelling, and in the fluttering of his wing to tell him his earthly race was nearly run, the sands of time would soon be run out.

"I went to his house to inquire how he was, hearing he was ill. I sent up my name to his chamber, and was immediately invited to go to him. I found him in an agony of soul—his arms beseechingly uplifted. He gave me his hand, saying: 'Pray for me; oh, pray earnestly for me!' My sympathy and distress were so great that I could not reply for some time. I then said, 'Oh, pray thyself; the door is open for all to come boldly to the throne of Grace!' He turned quickly upon me with a fixed gaze, saying: 'Hear me; mark what I say, and tell it; tell it as my dying testimony. The Society of Friends hold the truth, the very truth; their doctrines are the very truth of God; *if they are only carried out.*'

This he repeated twice, 'if they are only carried out.' He paused, and then, with a loud voice, said: 'O God, look down in thy wonted mercy, and pardon, or receive me!' He then signified to his wife that I might leave the room for a short time, but to come back to him again. I parted from him in agonized silence, with a warm pressure of his hand and a look of deep sympathy. I was asked to sit in the parlor; but I went home to my own house, and to my bedchamber, where, on bended knees, I supplicated for him as if for my own life. Suddenly, like a flash of lightning, all access of words or spirit was withdrawn, and I rose from my prostrate position and sat down amazed at my feelings. Not long was I left in uncertainty. A knock at my door by a servant revealed to me that the spirit of my friend had left its earthly tabernacle; which accounted to me the cause of my strange position when pleading for my friend. It has ever appeared to me a most remarkable thing, that on his death-bed he should so solemnly revoke his assertions respecting the Society of Friends and their doctrines, and to the very person to whom his words of deprecation were addressed. . . . . .

"ELIZABETH KNOTT.

"RATHANGAN, sixth mo. 21st, 1867."

The individual alluded to in the foregoing account is understood to have been Henry Treffry, a man well known in the city of Exeter for his exertions in behalf of the poor. He died in the early part of the ninth month, 1846, and is believed to have renounced his

reliance on his own intellectual abilities, and to have again declared his faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. His widow has recently confirmed the account, adding this testimony: "Well do I remember his words: 'Had I my time to live over again, I would endeavor to hold fast the doctrines I had been taught, and which are the very *truth*, provided they *are carried out.*'"

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE "GURNEY" CONTROVERSY AND SCHISM, TO THE YEAR 1840.

One storm had scarcely seemed to pass away, before the thunderings of another alarmed those who had ears to hear through the apparent lull. And yet not another, for before the body or outward form of what was called "Beaconism" had entirely gone out at the back door, its spirit, in a far more insidious and fascinating manner, and with tenfold power to insnare and entice away the unwary, had made an entrance at the front, had gained many of the upper seats, and was prepared, not only to maintain its position there, but to take measures calculated gradually and almost imperceptibly to gain over nearly the whole Society to the very same fundamental changes, the suggestion of which had been the foundation of the Beacon schism. It soon became evident, that but a small portion of the disaffection against our well-known principles had already been cleared away by that schism—that the unsound leaven still remained, and had even spread to a wider extent during the late difficulties—and that the portion of the Society really concerned, openly and unreservedly to maintain the ancient landmarks, was becoming comparatively small.

The Yearly Meeting of London, in 1836, had taken one very important step in lowering the standard; and had thus unhappily opened a wide door for the influx of error, of which the enemy failed not to take advantage; and the ultimate results of which we are sorrowfully witnessing at the present day. Thousands, nay, tens of thousands, might have been subsequently preserved from lapsing into the "beggarly elements" from which the Society was, in early days, mercifully redeemed, had it not been for this false step taken by that Yearly Meeting. We must, therefore, turn back a little to the proceedings in London, of that year. The Yearly Meeting from first to last was a memorable occasion of conflict between ancient truth and modern error. But a small part only of its transactions, bearing more particularly on this subject, need engage our attention.

At one of the early sittings, Sarah Lynes Grubb came into the men's meeting with a gospel message, encouraging to faithfulness, and solemnly warning the "Babel builders," who were advancing to confusion of tongues.

The following is the *substance* of her address, written shortly afterwards from memory, by a friend who was present:*

"I am come among you, a poor weak creature, laden "with a burden, the weight of which cannot be ex- "pressed, even by the tongue of the eloquent, much less "by mine; but I must endeavor to lay it down.

"The time is now come, often foretold, when the Lord "would descend amongst this people, as the rain, the

* See S. Alexander's "Voice from the Wilderness," pages 40 to 43; also, "Life of Sarah Grubb, late Lynes," Eng. edit., p. 333.

"storm, and the overflowing flood. It must indeed be "acknowledged, that a mighty shaking has come upon "us. There are among you those who have been as "fruitful branches; but for want of abiding in the root, "and retaining the sap, they are withering, and will "wither.

"The foundation of every individual in this Society "will be discovered, whether it be upon the rock or "upon the sand. 'Whosoever heareth my sayings,' said "our blessed Saviour, 'and doeth them, I will show you "to whom he is like. He is like a man which built an "house, and digged deep' (Friends, you do not like the "trouble of *digging deep*), 'and laid the foundation on "a rock.' The Jews heard this saying of Christ with "their outward ears, but, having their inward ears "closed, they would not build on Him the Rock; and "when the rain descended, the floods came, and the "winds blew, they fell.

"How painful were the sufferings of our forefathers, "in coming to this foundation! Their opponents were "strong in the words of the Scripture, like those form-"erly who thought that in them they had eternal life; "to whom our dear Saviour addressed these words: 'Ye "search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have "eternal life, and they are they which testify of me; "and ye will not come to me that ye might have life.' "Thus, though they studied the Scriptures, and imagined "they were skilled in the knowledge of them, yet, rest-"ing in their outward knowledge, they would not come "unto Him of whom they testified, and in whom alone "there is life. You, too, study the Scriptures, by the "strength of your rational and intellectual faculties, and

"doubt not you comprehend their meaning; and here "you stop: you refuse to come unto Christ, in His in- "ward and spiritual appearance; you will not hear His "voice speaking in your hearts, and are therefore re- "jecting Him.

"Man is a dark, benighted creature. By his natural "powers he cannot know himself; he cannot discover "his way out of the fall, into a lasting union with his "Maker. His heart is deceitful above all things, he "must therefore come unto Him who searcheth the "heart. And how doth He search the heart? By His "Spirit; for 'the Spirit searcheth all things; yea, the "deep things of God.' For what man knoweth the "things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in "him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, "but the Spirit of God. The light of Christ is imparted "to each of us—a measure of the same Spirit that gave "forth the Scriptures. When Adam had transgressed "the commands of his Maker, he lost the divine image "in which he was created; he died to the heavenly life "he had in God. But our Lord Jesus Christ, in His "infinite mercy, entered into his [man's] heart, as the "true light, wisdom, and power; and it is only in His "light that we can see light.

"Oh, my friends! there were some in ancient days "who said one to another, 'Go to, let us make brick, "and burn them thoroughly; let us build us a city and "a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven.' Some of "you are laying hand to hand, and shoulder to shoulder, "to erect a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; "beautiful indeed to the eye, and of fair proportions; "and you are saying to others, 'Come, and behold what

"we are doing; join yourselves unto us, and we will "show you the gospel path unto heaven; a path full of "charity and love; an easy and a comfortable path, "wherein ye may avoid the cross.' But 'say ye not, "a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall "say, a confederacy.' Oh! beware of that subtle spirit, "which would lead you from the pure truth under such "delusive pretensions; for though these talk of the unity "of the Spirit, it is not the cementing influence with "which Christ unites his disciples in precious fellow-"ship. And I am commanded to tell you, that, as in "the instance of the tower of Babel, the Lord came "down, and confounded their language; so it will be "with the Babel-builders amongst us. For, when they "come together, they will not understand each other's "speech; and their building on the sand will crumble "to pieces, and they themselves will wither, wither, "wither! and be scattered to the north and to the south, "to the east and to the west.*

"And, oh! let me earnestly entreat you of this de-"scription, in the love of the gospel, to stand still, and "see what you are doing. I believe there have been "times, when some of you have seen, in the true light, "that you were wrong; but the pride of your hearts "would not suffer you to acknowledge it. But remem-"ber, it is an awful thing, to tempt the Lord your God! "You know not how long these convictions may be "granted you; and if the light that is in you become "darkness, how great is that darkness?

* This was, a few years afterwards, obviously in part verified, in the scattering of the Beacon party.

"And now, my beloved young people,—you, dear "children, on whose account I have often raised the "secret petition in my chamber, and the more public "one in the assemblies of our people,—be not dismayed "at the prospect before you; for I have to tell you (and "I wish you to take notice of it, and to write it down), "that all this that now causes so much stumbling and "perplexity, and produces such a sensation, will fade "away, and the authors of it will go back to the world "and the beggarly elements; and, on looking round, "you will wonder, and say: 'What is become of that "great work that was doing, and where are the authors "of it?'

"What became of those who, in former days, caused "divisions in this Society? Were they not all blighted "and scattered?

"And ye faithful ones, to whom the principles of "truth are yet precious; who love the pure cause, and "are often bowed down in spirit on its behalf: you have "no cause to fear; for, though you be left as the gleanings "of the grapes of the vintage, yet shall you be planted "on a very fruitful hill; not one of self-exaltation, but "a hill above the level of the spirit of this world; and "you shall spread abroad, and increase, and flourish. "For this society was planted a noble vine, 'wholly a "right seed;' and it is not the will of the Almighty, "that this people should ever cease to be a people.

"I brought nothing with me into this meeting; for I "remembered our Saviour's command to his disciples, "not to take thought how they might speak, for 'it shall "be given you in that hour, what ye shall speak.'"

At a later sitting, Ann Jones, of Stockport, likewise visited the men's meeting, and is said to have expressed herself nearly as follows.* "I can truly say, I came "into this Meeting not knowing whether I should have "anything to communicate; but my mind has been im- "pressed, as I have sat for a short season amongst you, "and I was willing to become a fool amongst you, for "the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. Would that there "were more among you, who were willing to become "fools for his sake! There are those among us who are "encouraging a carnal wisdom, a head knowledge, an "outward learning, which exalteth itself, and is ever "endeavoring, in its own strength, to find out the way "of salvation by the study of Scripture. This spirit "has spread even among those who are making a very "high profession—men who are robbing Christ. They "talk much of a belief in the atoning sacrifice, but are "setting at naught and despising Christ in his inward "and spiritual appearance. It is an awful thing, my "friends, to take the name of the Lord in vain! These "take the words of the prophets, and apply them in a "carnal sense. Such was not the way in which our "worthy predecessors acted; the Lord raised our pre- "decessors in the truth to be a light in a dark and de- "generate age; and through their instrumentality, he "was pleased to reprove the carnal professors of the out- "ward letter of their day. But there are some amongst "you, who are holding up to scorn the acts and writings

* See a "Report of the Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting of Friends," 1836, published by John Stephens, 153 Fleet Street, pages 13 and 14.

"of these our worthy predecessors, and are endeavoring "to cast disrespect upon them.* Take care! As you "will have to give account in the awful day of righte- "ous retribution, I charge you to take care how you "hold up them and their writings to derision. They "are resting from their labors, far beyond the reach of "your derision. Your bitter cunning shafts will turn "against your own heads. Beware, then, how, with un- "hallowed foot, you trample on their ashes, or attempt "to cast a shadow over the brightness of their character. "These expressions may appear strong; but I cannot "choose my own words, as a minister of the Gospel. I "always desire to be the instrument through which the "Lord shall speak, and not a word more than He shall "give me, and to declare to you the whole counsel of "God, so that I may be clear of your blood.

"The Lord hath a controversy with the spirit which "hath crept into this Society, and which is sitting in the "judgment-seat. The Lord, I say, hath a controversy "with these; but He hath, if possible, a still greater "controversy with those *who are seeking to please both* "*parties*—to pursue *a middle course!* What concord hath "Christ with Belial? What union between the temple "of God and idols? But I have a word of comfort for "the little remnant, whom the Lord hath yet among "his people. May He grant you His Spirit to discern "and to avoid the grievous errors which abound; and "the Lord God Almighty will show himself valiant on "your side, and will arise for your signal deliverance."

* Elisha Bates was endeavoring, in print, to prove G. Fox and our early Friends mere enthusiasts.

We may mark here her especial testimony against pursuing "*a middle course*," and "*seeking to please both parties*;" inasmuch as that "middle course" proved afterwards, in the cunning craftiness of the enemy, the great lever for aiding the schism to a wonderful degree in England and America, carrying many into the ranks of innovation, who, but for its plausible pleadings for peace and quietness at any price, would not have been led into the temptation of throwing their influence into that scale.

After Ann Jones retired, the meeting was occupied in considering the following proposition from Westmoreland Quarterly Meeting, which was prominently advocated by Isaac Braithwaite, viz.:

"A difference of opinion having arisen in the Society "as to the authority of Holy Scripture in matters of "faith and doctrine, this meeting requests the Yearly "Meeting to take the subject into its serious consider- "ation, and clearly to define what are, in its estimation, "the authority, place, and office of the Holy Scriptures, "as the rule of faith and practice."

The meeting was much divided in sentiment in regard to the disposal of this insidious proposition; the declared members of the Beacon party not being by any means the only advocates of a definitive minute sustaining their views. Great discussion ensued, in which J. J. Gurney is represented as expressing his views as follows:* That "he felt considerable difficulty in regard to the pre- "amble of the proposition, because he considered that

* Vide "Stephens's Report of the London Yearly Meeting," 1836.

"the Society, *from the earliest period* of its existence, *had* "*held the paramount authority of Holy Scripture*, and he "hoped they would never depart from it. Could he unite "in the charges some had made, he should be com- "pelled to turn his back on this beloved Society. No, "my friends," said he, "we are, we always have been, "and by the grace of God we always will be, a Chris- "tian body; but when once we shall have admitted the "principle, that impressions made upon our own minds "can be superior to Scripture, that moment we cease to "be Christians. We have ever acknowledged the direct "authority of Holy Scripture in determining religious "controversy, and not only in regard to the great doc- "trines of religion, but we have had *no other standard* "*as to any conclusion or practices connected with re-* "*ligion.*" In continuation, he said, "he thought the "degree of difference which existed among them might "be materially relieved by a little explanation, and "especially with regard to the use of the word *rule*, "which he considered an objectionable term. The early "writers of our Society instituted a comparison between "the *influence* of the Holy Spirit (as he supposed) and "the Holy Scriptures, calling the first a *primary rule*, "and the latter a *secondary*. It was certain that the "influence of the Holy Spirit was the fountain of the "Scriptures, and in that case it was primary; also, that "the influence of the Holy Spirit existed *before* the "Scriptures, and in that sense also it was *primary;* the "*mistake* had ensued *from making* the *Scriptures secon-* "*dary*, as it regarded *authority*. He trusted that Friends "would never give up their distinguishing views of the "free and independent operations of the Holy Spirit.

"But with respect to *authority*, they *had nothing to ap-*
"*peal to besides the Scriptures*, and *they* must be the
"ultimate standard and test of *all* religious truth. With-
"out controversy, the Gospel [meaning the Bible] was
"given them for the purpose of their salvation, and,
"when applied to the heart, was the power of God unto
"salvation. Whatever mistakes individuals in the So-
"ciety might have made, he was confident that the body
"was sound, and that it would never recognize the
"principle, that the Holy Scriptures were to be subor-
"dinated to impressions made upon our own minds. He
"could not doubt that every person in the meeting
"would unite in the following propositions: 1st. That
"the Holy Scriptures were given by inspiration. 2d.
"That the declaration being of divine authority, there
"can be no higher authority. 3d. That they are able
"to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in
"Christ Jesus. 4th. That they are *the only* authorized
"record from which we can learn whatever may be
"taught, or required of Christian men to believe; and
"that whatever is contrary to Holy Scripture, is to be
"esteemed a delusion of the devil. Finally, that no
"other standard of religious belief is recognized by this
"Society. He could not but believe, that if Friends
"would allow their minds to sink into a state of calm-
"ness, they might come to a satisfactory conclusion in
"this matter; for he contended that the Society (as a
"Society) had always been clear in its views of the
"authority of Holy Scripture. But although such was
"his opinion, founded on close and deliberate investi-
"gation, justice and truth required him to confess, that
"many writers and individuals, both in the early and

"latter ages of this Society, in their great zeal to uphold "their own views, had sadly committed themselves on "this subject; and he regretted to acknowledge it. They "had advocated principles which he did not hesitate to "declare, if carried out, were completely subversive of "Christianity. But, in regard to the earlier writers at "least, this must be ascribed to excess of zeal for some "particular truth, and to that inaccuracy of thinking "and writing, of which all of them were sometimes "guilty. But though, from these causes, he could not "deny that they had sometimes overshot the mark, he "for one stoutly maintained their general Christian integ- "rity. The objectionable passages in their writings had "of late been brought into prominence by two opposite "parties, and with very different intentions. While one "party had adduced them for the purpose of exposing "the Society to an unmerited degree of odium, the other "had brought them forward to advocate them, and the "principles which might be deduced from them. On "the subject which particularly agitated the Society at "the present time, he did not hesitate to declare, that "*he was a middle man—the Lord forbid that he should* "*be any other!*—and this not, as some had asserted, from "indecision, but from a clear conviction that there was "great danger, while they were avoiding Scylla, of fall- "ing into Charybdis. He would affectionately exhort "his dear friends to *take this middle course,* for he be- "lieved it to be the right one—to choose the middle of "the river Jordan, for that was the deepest. He would "not compromise one jot of true Christianity, nor yet "of sound Quakerism, for he asserted them to be [iden- "tical?—word obscure]. The distinguishing [tenet?] of

"the Society had always been, the free and independent "influence of the Holy Spirit; and to this he would "always hold. The Society had compromised nothing "which could be found in Holy Scripture, and the "expression, *Christianity without compromise*, conveyed "his notion of what Quakerism was." In conclusion, he repeated, "that he was confident the Society had "always been quite sound in its estimation of Holy "Scripture; but he did hope, before this Yearly Meet- "ing was over, that, for the relief of the minds of some "Friends, it would again send forth a very decided and "explicit statement on this important subject."

In these remarks (which I have believed it right to give entire, as we find them in the before-mentioned reports, and the general correctness of which report of them, I have never heard to have been questioned or denied by him or his advocates) he not only plainly evinced his erroneous position with regard to the Scriptures—a position utterly and palpably at variance with the views of Robert Barclay, and all our other early writers—and grossly misrepresented what he called the sound tenets of the Society thereupon, construing them to have believed what he believed himself, and therefore averring that their belief was always sound; but also, in the very same sitting in which that deeply experienced minister, Ann Jones, had so solemnly testified against a "middle course," he announced himself as "a middle man," adding, "the Lord forbid that he should be any other!"—and then exhorted his hearers to the same "middle course."

Many Friends, nevertheless, opposed any action on the subject; among whom were William Allen, George

Jones, James Richardson, Samuel Rundell, William Rickman, and Josiah Forster; believing that the views of the Society were already sufficiently clear, and some of them fearing that any fresh declaration respecting it would but weaken their well-known and fundamental testimony. But the meeting at length decided that the Committee on the General Epistle should be directed to prepare and introduce a paragraph, "fully and explicitly confirmatory of the well-known and previously recorded sentiments of the Society on the subject."* The committee, however, appear to have transcended the terms of their instructions, and at a subsequent sitting brought in a form for the paragraph, which after some slight changes stood as follows:†

"Often as our religious Society has declared its belief "in the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and "upheld the *sacred volume as the only divinely authorized* "*record* of the doctrines of true religion, we believe it "right at this time to revive some important declara- "tions of Scripture itself on the subject." (Then, quoting 2 Peter 1:21; John 20:31; 2 Tim. 3:15–17; Rom. 15:4; and John 10:35; none, certainly, of which texts do anything at all to sustain them in their assertion of the Scriptures being "*the only* divinely authorized record," etc., they proceed thus): "Although "most of these passages relate to the Old Testament, our "Society has always freely acknowledged that the prin- "ciples developed in them are equally applicable to the "writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. In con-

* "Stephens's Report of London Yearly Meeting." 1836, page 18.
† Ibid., page 30.

"formity with these principles, it has ever been, and "still is, the belief of the Society of Friends, that the "Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were "written by inspiration of God; that, therefore, the "declarations contained in them rest on the authority "of God himself; and there can be no appeal from them "to any other authority whatsoever: that they are able "to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is "in Christ Jesus; being *the appointed means* of making "known to us the *blessed* truths of Christianity: that they "are *the only divinely authorized record* of the doctrines "which we are bound as Christians to believe, and of "the moral principles which are to regulate our actions: "that no doctrine which is not contained in the Holy "Scriptures can be required of any one to be believed "as an article of faith: that whatsoever any man says "or does which is contrary to the Scriptures, though "under profession of the immediate guidance of the "Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delu-"sion. We trust, however, that none of our members "will content themselves with merely entertaining a "sound view on this subject, but will remember that the "Holy Scriptures are given to us that they may be dili-"gently used, and that we may obtain a right under-"standing of them in the fear of the Lord. Let us "never forget that their true purpose is, under the in-"fluence of the Holy Spirit, to bring us to our Lord "Jesus Christ, that, by a living operative faith in Him, "we may obtain reconciliation with the Father, and be "made partakers of everlasting life."

Though some of this was true, yet in its intent and aim it was false and insidious. It would be difficult to

explain where the committee found anything in the prominent features of this paragraph, "explicitly confirmatory" of "the well-known sentiments of the Society," or even in accordance with the "well-known sentiments" of a single acknowledged writer among our early Friends, in conformity with their instructions. It is on the contrary a direct abandonment of the principle always promulgated in their writings, that "the appointed means" for the soul of man to obtain a saving knowledge of God, is a being taught in the school of Christ, through obedience to the "Inspeaking Word," and faith in the revelations of His Holy Spirit immediately in the heart; which will always be *consistent with* Scripture. Its intent moreover in designating the Scriptures as "*the only* record" appears to have been to exclude the idea of any divine authority in the writings of such men as George Fox, Robert Barclay, or Isaac Penington, or in the excellent code of discipline and confessions of faith established and acknowledged by Friends under the pointings of wisdom from on high; and thus by bartering away one of our fundamental principles, of unspeakable practical importance, the vain hope was entertained, of conciliating and staying the secession of those who did not believe in the doctrines of the gospel, held by our ancient Friends.

This document was read twice over as a whole, and then considered by sentences, so that the meeting had its sense clearly and fully before it. Several friends objected to the words, "the only authorized record;" and William Southall, of Leominster, declared that the admission of that expression went to the subversion of the very foundation of Quakerism. But J. J. Gurney promptly

replied that he considered the expression perfectly correct and safe. Notwithstanding considerable opposition therefore, the paragraph was adopted, and thus the Yearly Meeting of London placed itself foremost in a clearly defined official departure from at least one of the fundamental and characteristic tenets of true Quakerism, and opened a wide door for other innovations.

In the year 1834, Samuel Rundell, a friend residing in the southwestern part of England, had published a small treatise on Redemption, Divine Worship, and partaking of the flesh and blood of Christ; a work entirely consonant with the views of true Friends from the beginning of the Society, and consequently calculated to operate in some degree as an antidote to the new opinions. But a second edition being called for, early in 1836, he submitted it to the consideration of the "Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders" in London; the body to which appertained, according to the practice in England, the function of examining all works on doctrinal subjects, proposed for publication by members of that Yearly Meeting. That meeting was mainly composed of the ministers and elders residing in and near London. After reading S. Rundell's treatise, the meeting referred it to a committee. This committee kept it shut up for twenty months.* At length, in the eleventh month, 1837, the matter was roused up by John Barclay; when it appeared that the treatise was not approved by some, as inculcating views which most of the committee

* See Letter of Lydia A. Barclay, in J. Wilbur's Journal and Correspondence, p. 240; and Letter of John Barclay, in same work, p 226.

thought objectionable. John Barclay then came forward in a firm defence of the tract, confuting all the objections, and closely expostulating with several of the members on their tendency outward. But William Allen alone stood openly by John Barclay, in support of the work; so that the objectors, having the control in their own hands, ordered a letter to be written to the author, strongly advising his withdrawing the treatise from publication. Thus they thought to have suppressed it, and it was soon given out, that the author had withdrawn it. But in consequence of the decided encouragement given to its publication, notwithstanding all this, by Daniel Wheeler,* who knew it to be sound as to true Christian doctrine, and applicable to the times, S. Rundell, who had requested and been refused a conference with the committee, concluded to take the responsibility of publishing it, and obtained the assistance of Abraham Rawlinson Barclay in passing it through the press. Here was another instance of serious dereliction from our ancient principles on the part of the leaders of the people, now manifested in an endeavor to suppress the publication of the fundamental doctrines of the Society.

Still another evidence of the tone of feeling prevalent among the influential members at that time, to discountenance all public avowals of some of our true and indeed distinguishing doctrines, was furnished by the action of the Meeting for Sufferings, in printing extracts from the Journal of Daniel Wheeler, while engaged in his visit to the islands of the Pacific Ocean; by which the

* J. Wilbur's Journal and Correspondence, p. 241.

accounts which he sent to England were mutilated and shorn of some of the most important portions. Daniel Wheeler himself, when in Philadelphia, told the writer of this work, that portions of his manuscript which he was the most anxious to have published, if any should be published at all during his life, (of which he was himself inclined to doubt the propriety), that these portions, developing his *true* position in relation to the missionaries in those islands, and his plain advocacy to them, of the spiritual nature of the gospel dispensation, and the necessity of primary attention to "the inspeaking Word," nigh in the hearts of all men, had been to a large extent suppressed in putting his accounts in print during his absence. He was especially grieved at this injustice, because it placed him permanently before the public in a defective, if not actually in a false light. Many paragraphs thus omitted were of great doctrinal significance, and were restored in the edition of his Life and Gospel Labors, printed after his decease by his children, with the aid of Abraham Rawlinson Barclay. These omissions may be easily recognized by comparing pages 324, 344, 362, 365, 367, 417, 549, 551, 568, 570, 571, 575, and the *Address* to the *Missionaries*, of eight pages, commencing at page 652, of the last-named work, with the corresponding parts of his Journal as at first published by the Meeting for Sufferings. These omitted passages represented Daniel Wheeler as inculcating to the natives of those islands and to his hearers generally, on various occasions, the necessity of obedience to "the witness in the heart of every man"—that there was "no necessity to look to this minister or that minister, but to Christ, the true minister of ministers,"—turning their at-

tention primarily to their Heavenly Teacher—that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men"—that "that which made them sensible of sin, was the gospel, which was preached in and unto every creature under heaven"—showing them the distinction between the word that "was in the beginning with God and was God," and the Bible—affirming that the Holy Spirit was greater than the Scriptures—desiring "that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith"—and opening to them the coming of his Holy Spirit into their hearts, and the great truth of the Universality of the grace of God. The Address to the Missionaries was *entirely* omitted. It was a touching and earnest farewell appeal to them, written under a deep feeling of concern and exercise; recommending close attention to the "still small voice," in "the silence of all flesh"—reminding them that "as a stream cannot rise higher than its fountain, so it is impossible for any to instruct others further than they themselves have learned in the school of Christ"—and that "a historical or traditional faith, or one that admits of a continuance in sin, is dead and unavailing"—and finally commending them to God and the Word of his grace, "even that eternal Word, which liveth and abideth forever." What true Friend could venture to allege that such sentiments were not fit to be spread before the public? And what but a culpable want of faith in the genuine principles of Quakerism, can have induced the attempted suppression of them?

A few days after the close of the Yearly Meeting of 1836, viz., on the 12th of the sixth month, died at Tottenham near London, that honest laborer in the Lord's vineyard, Thomas Shillitoe, aged about 82 years. He

had only been able, from great debility of body, to attend a very small portion of the Yearly Meeting; perhaps the last sitting, and one sitting of the Select Meeting. But his mind was still livingly concerned for the welfare of the Lord's heritage. His last sickness was a short and suffering one, but attended sensibly by the merciful presence of the Master whom he had long endeavored faithfully to serve; and who now sustained his spirit in great calmness and peace, through all the conflicts of bodily dissolution. He uttered, during these few days, many sweet expressions, evincing his comfortable hope and trust in Christ his Saviour.

Three days before his decease, his neighbor John Hodgkin coming into his room, he requested him to take down in writing the following testimony of his dying sentiments, in regard to the Episcopalian tenets of Joseph John Gurney.

"This testimony rested on his mind, and he must "have it committed to paper, as he found his peace con- "sisted in so doing. [Then addressing J. H.] Thou "wilt want a great deal of time and patience, to hear "what I have got to say, and it must be faithfully de- "livered, for I am afraid, at a future day, it will de- "volve heavy upon thy shoulders. It is extraordinary "that thou shouldst have come in at this juncture, for I "have been wanting my son-in-law to come in, and put "down what I am now better satisfied should be re- "ceived by thee from my mouth. And I therefore de- "clare, unequivocally, against the generality of the writ- "ings of Joseph John Gurney, as being non-Quaker "principles, not sound Quaker principles, but Episco- "palian ones; and they have done great mischief in our

"Society; and the Society will go gradually down, if it "yields to the further circulation of that part of his "works which they have in their power to suppress. "This is my firm belief. I have labored under the "weight of it for the last twelve months, beyond what "human nature is able to support. And the committee "of the Morning Meeting which passed that last work "(Gurney's 'Peculiarities,' with a new title), must be "willing to come forward, to be sufficiently humble to "acknowledge their error. And the Meeting for Suffer-"ings must also be willing to remove its authority in "allowing it to be given away to those not of our So-"ciety. I declare the author is an Episcopalian, not a "Quaker. I apprehend J. J. Gurney is no Quaker in "principle. Episcopalian views were imbibed from his "education, and still remain with him. I love the man, "for the work's sake, so far as it goes; but he has never "been emptied from vessel to vessel, and from sieve to "sieve, nor known the baptism of the Holy Ghost and "of fire, to cleanse the floor of his heart from his Epis-"copalian notions. He has spread a linsey woolsey "garment over our members; but in a future day it will "be stripped off; it will be too short for them, as they "will be without Jesus Christ the Lord. This is my "dying testimony, and I must sign it. If I had been "faithful, I should have expressed it in the last Yearly "Meeting of Ministers and Elders; but I hope I shall "be forgiven. O Lord! accept me with the best I "have! I have letters from America, which confirm "me in the truth of every part of what I now state. I "believe there is not an individual member of our So-"ciety, in England, Scotland, or Ireland, more willing

"to do good, than J. J. Gurney. But willingness is no "qualification. This is my dying testimony to Quaker "views, especially as to the ministry. What was anti-"christ in George Fox's days, is antichrist now. The "clergy of this country, to a man, every one of them, "are antichrist so long as they wear the gowns and re-"ceive the pay, and continue building up the people in "the relics of Popery, which the church of England left "behind [retained]. It will not do to speak of a man "doing a great deal for a little pay, and call him a min-"ister of Christ. It is a grievous thing, that any min-"ister in our Society should so speak. They are anti-"christ still, since they lead the people from Christ. "And yet I love some of them for the work's sake, so "far as they go."

Towards the close of the pamphlet controversy in regard to the "Beacon," J. J. Gurney prepared for publication, as an Appendix to his "Strictures on 'Truth Vindicated,'" a tract entitled "Brief Remarks on Impartiality in the Interpretation of Scripture;" but on submitting both these together to the Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders, that meeting avoided the responsibility of sanctioning the "Brief Remarks," and, separating the two, only approved of his publishing the "Strictures." Yet he afterwards issued the "Brief Remarks," *printed for private circulation only*, and distributed them among the ministers and elders. This, however, made them all the more sought after, and before long the tract was reprinted by other parties, for publication without his sanction. It thus obtained a wide distribution, and although *not "published"* ostensibly by himself, yet it showed his real sentiments, and

what he would have published, had he not for once, been prudently restrained by the Morning Meeting. No wonder, that even this meeting could hardly venture to sanction it; for in this work he came forward more distinctly than ever before, against the authority and judgment of our early writers on points of doctrine. Indeed this brief production could scarcely be looked upon by any unbiassed mind, as other than a direct attempt to undermine the authority of our ancient authors, as exponents of our true principles. It had the appearance of being a *specification* of the charge of "serious errors," stated by him in general terms, in the Yearly Meeting of 1836. It contained twelve specific instances of what he considered erroneous interpretations of Scripture, on the part of "some persons," and "several writers;" by which a "fictitious and spurious support" had been, as he thought, given to "genuine Quakerism;" and he declared his conviction, "that the sooner such errors are rectified, the better for the growth and prosperity of our little section of the Christian Church;" inasmuch as "they are the stepping-stones, by which unwary persons may be, in no small degree, assisted in an actual descent into heresy."

His first instance was the interpretation put upon "the more sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1: 19–21); which he thought referred to the Scriptures, in direct contradiction of the testimony of George Fox, William Penn, Robert Barclay, George Whitehead, Francis Howgill, Samuel Fisher, James Parnell, and indeed the unanimous voice of all our early writers.*

* These objections are more fully described in "An Examination of the Memoirs and Writings of J. J. Gurney," pp. 109 to 124. Philadelphia, 1856.

His second objection was to the interpretation put "by some persons under our name," upon the word Gospel (as Rom. 1 : 16), which he thought ought not to be described as "the power of God unto salvation," but confined to the "glad tidings" of the "incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection," of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Here again he ran directly against George Fox, R. Barclay, Edward Burrough, etc., designated here by him as "some persons under our name."

His third objection was similar, in which he construed the apostle (Col. 1 : 21–23) in saying that the gospel was "preached to (or in) every creature under heaven," merely to mean that the glad tidings of the incarnation, etc., of Christ had then "reached every province" of the Roman Empire or known world!

His fourth was in reference to John 1 : 9, "The true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" objecting to the view of "several writers," that "the light of the Spirit of God in the heart of man, is itself actually Christ:" whereas Barclay says that "forasmuch as Christ is called that light that enlightens every man, the light of the world, therefore *the light* is taken *for Christ;*" and again, "the light of Christ is sometimes called Christ, *i. e.*, that in which Christ is, and *from which he is never separated.*"

His fifth instance was of the same import, objecting to the practice, common among Friends, of designating Christ as "the anointing," as he considered that this was "identifying Him with the influence of the Holy Spirit."

His sixth instance was in reference to the expression, "Christ in you the hope of glory," which, he said, was

"often recited by *mistake*, as *Christ within*." His objection here showed his outward and carnal views, and his practical discarding of the doctrine of Christ, by his Spirit, *dwelling in* the hearts of the faithful. What he here alleged was palpably contradictory of Robert Barclay, and the whole scope of early Friends' writings.

His seventh objection was to the use made by George Fox and many others, of the word "seed," in applying it to the inward appearance of Christ in the soul; alleging that "these mistakes," and particularly in reference to "Christ the light," and "Christ within," have "aided that tremendous process of heresy," by which the "Son of God is gradually converted into a mere influence, and finally becomes nothing at all but *a seed* sown in the hearts of all men." He expressed disapprobation of the manner in which the term was used by George Fox, in saying, during his last sickness, "Though I am weak in body, yet the power of God is over all, and *the Seed* reigns over all disorderly spirits." Isaac Penington and Robert Barclay also frequently made use of the expression; and in a famous dispute at Aberdeen, between R. Barclay and George Keith, and some students of theology, George Keith in sustaining the propriety of the use made of the term by Friends, quoted *Clemens Alexandrinus*, as having said, "that Christ compared himself to a grain of mustard-seed, in his inward appearance in the heart."

His eighth instance was in regard to the saying of our Saviour to Peter, "Upon this Rock will I build my church," etc. (Matt. 16 : 15–18),—alluding to the immediate revelation of Himself to the mind of that apostle, from the Father, by which he was enabled liv-

ingly to confess, from a blessed conviction, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It seems extraordinary to find J. J. Gurney here intimating the sentiment, that "this Rock" was intended by our Lord to refer to the mere *fact acknowledged* by Peter, of Jesus being "the Christ, the Son of God." George Fox is very clear on the subject, in his "Doctrinal Works," pp. 999 and 1000.

His ninth and tenth objections were in regard to "the name" of God or of Christ being considered by Friends, in many instances, to refer to his power (as Acts 4 : 9 ; John 16 : 23, etc.). And he goes so far as to say that to pray in the name of Christ is merely to ask "on the authority of Jesus, and to plead his interest with the Father; or, in other words, to pray in *sole dependence* on his all-availing mediation;" rejecting the idea of its referring to prayer "under the influence of the Spirit of Christ;" and saying that "to ask a favor of A. in the name of B., is to make use of the authority or interest which B. has with A., in order to obtain that favor." And he implied that the belief, that "prayers which contain no reference to the mediation of Christ," are "nevertheless acceptable," is merely a "notion."

This is not the place for it, or many extracts from our early writers might be adduced, evincing that they were entirely agreed in considering the *power of God* to be often implied in the Holy Scripture by the expression, of his "name." Robert Barclay's testimony on this point is very clear, that "the *name* of the Lord is often "taken, in Scripture, for something else than a bare "sound of words, or literal expression, even for his "*virtue and power*. . . . That the apostles were by their

"ministry to baptize the nations into this *name, virtue,* "*and power,* and that they did so, is evident by these "testimonies," etc.

His eleventh instance of apprehended misinterpretation on the part of our early Friends, was in respect to the view they have always taken of the "body and blood of Christ." Believing as he did that "the flesh always means his *human body,*" and that "his blood always means his *very blood,*" he stumbled sadly in striving to explain, according to human learning and wisdom, that "the *metaphor* lies—*not* in the *blood*, but in the *drinking, sprinkling, washing*, etc." Truly did Barclay say, and Gurney exemplify, that the "communion of the body and blood of Christ is a mystery hid from all natural men, in their first, fallen, and degenerate state, neither, as they there are, can they be partakers of it, nor yet are they able *to discern the Lord's body.*"

The twelfth of these objections was against the interpretation always given by Friends, to the text (Heb. 9:27, 28) concerning the coming of Christ "the second time, without sin, unto salvation." He asserted, in direct opposition to the uniformly expressed views of sound Friends from the beginning of the Society, that this second coming "is nothing more nor less than his future coming in glory, to judge the quick and the dead;" and thought it a "mistaken impression," which has led "some persons," to "apply this passage to the coming of Christ, by his Spirit, for the refreshment and edification of his church."

After all these objections to our early writers, he seemed to desire still one more sweep, to do away en-

tirely with any confidence in them as exponents of true Quakerism; concluding with the following words:

"Were I required to define Quakerism, I would not "describe it as the system so elaborately wrought out by "a Barclay, or as the doctrine and maxims of a Penn, "or as the deep and refined views of a Penington; for "all these authors have their defects, as well as their "excellencies; I should call it, the religion of the New "Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with-"out diminution, without addition, and without com-"promise."

It were strange, indeed, if he did not know that this would be no definition to satisfy others, inasmuch as every Protestant community would say the same of their own profession.* Yet few of their members would be found disposed so to run down their standard authors, as if they were very mistaken men.

J. J. Gurney had by this time manifested, in his numerous publications (irrespective of the last named Brief Remarks on Interpretation), the following points of variance from the settled characteristic doctrines of Friends.

He considered that the saving knowledge of God was to be obtained only through the Scriptures—though granting the need of the aid of the Holy Spirit in applying them.

* Judge Drake, in arguing against the Hicksites, in the famous New Jersey suit in 1832, alluded to a similar statement of theirs, justly remarking: "There is nothing characteristic in '*a belief in the Christian religion as contained in the New Testament.*' All sects of Christians, however widely separated, unite in professing this." See p 219 of this volume.

That for this end, the Scriptures are to be studied, with such helps as can be obtained from commentaries, and the plain laws of criticism, "familiar to every scholar."

That the Scriptures are the primary rule of faith and practice—not the Spirit—though granting the latter to be prior to them in point of "order and dignity."

That the Bible is "the only authorized record of divine truth," "the divinely appointed means of conversion," the "only means whereby to obtain a knowledge of sin," or of a "call to repentance," or of the "attributes of our Heavenly Father," or of our "moral duties," and that the evangelical narratives therein are "the Gospel;" thus practically discarding our great fundamental doctrine of Immediate Revelation and Universal and Saving Light, as stated by Barclay and others.

That faith is a "reliance of the soul on the incarnate Son," yet that it is a "natural faculty," and confounding it with Belief.

That the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers in Him—to "whosoever places his reliance on him as the atonement for sin," even though "vile and polluted" with sin; thus saving men *in* their sins, not *from* them—therefore that "justification precedes sanctification."

That the Father is *a person*—the Son *a person*—and the Holy Spirit *a person*—also speaking of them as "plurality in unity," and "plurality in essence," terms quite as objectionable and unscriptural as "Trinity in unity," if not more so.

That there is a "separate state," a "mansion of sepa-

rate spirits," between this life and the one of eternal duration.

That *these same bodies* will rise in the resurrection, as spiritual bodies.

That the first-day of the week is "*the* Christian Sabbath"—a "hallowed day."

That daily prayer in words and on the knees, ought to be taught to children as a "habit."

That all mankind are in "punishable *guilt*," in consequence of the transgression of our first parents; "*inheriting* a nature *infected with sin*," and are "*from birth vile and polluted;*" essentially, the common doctrine of "original sin."*

Besides the writings of J. J. Gurney, which exerted a powerful influence in modifying the views and practices of many who did not follow the "Beacon" party in their precipitate movement, Edward Ash, a physician of Bristol, issued several books of a kindred tendency, and evidently aiming with the former, to bring about, in the Society at large, without any open schism, an essential modification of some of its fundamental doctrines. He, too, insidiously endeavored to destroy the confidence of Friends in our early writers, as exponents of divine truth, although professing great esteem for their practical faithfulness and dedication. But, while similarly insidious, his works were not of equal importance with those of J. J. Gurney, being not nearly so numerous, nor so extensively received. Nor was the personal influence

* For proofs of his advocating these sentiments see "An Examination of his Life and Writings," Philadelphia, 1856; also the "Appeal for the Ancient Doctrines," and John Wilbur's "Exposition"

of the one to be at all compared with that of the other; received and welcomed, as was J. J. Gurney, by all ranks of the community, as a learned and philanthropic man, and cherished and applauded as the brother and earnest coadjutor of Elizabeth Fry.

Joseph John Gurney, in 1836, had declared himself "a middle man," doubtless, with a view to compromise, and to reconcile the contending parties, and thus to continue to hold a powerful influence, if not a controlling one, over the whole. But when he saw that he had been unable to prevent the secession of the Beaconites, and that all his efforts towards it only threatened to recoil upon himself, he apparently threw himself back into the ranks of those, then numerous in the Yearly Meeting, who professed to be standing for the doctrines of the Society, though in reality, by that time, much mixed and entangled with modern views. Having studiously kept himself in the main current through the preceding difficulties, he found it practicable for him to remain in it, without giving up any part of the novel views which characterized his writings and public declarations, and without going any further than he had hitherto done, towards founding his doctrines on the only sure basis, the inward teachings of the Spirit of truth—the light of Christ in the soul—which will never contradict the testimony of Holy Scripture.

Many Friends were far from being satisfied that he was sound in the faith, even when he came round and professed his adherence to what he deemed the proper doctrines of the Society; and some of them clearly saw that the late schism of the Beaconites had resulted from the very sentiments advocated in his published works.

But as he now opposed the secession, and used strenuous endeavors to keep the Society together, many of these were willing to hope that he was drawing nearer to the truth; and the bulk of the members in England, who greatly admired his popularity, and looked up to him as a man of extraordinary qualifications, clung round him in a body, and frowned down the open expression of suspicion that all was not right with him.

It is wonderful, with what a fascination he held control of the sentiments of nearly all the members, and turned them to the promotion of what he had in view—the establishment, in the whole Society, of a more popular way of religion than that which was revealed to and promulgated by our early Friends. It is true that this purpose was not confined to him, but was shared by many others in common with him. Yet it is equally true and manifest, that J. J. Gurney was the chiefly prominent developer of the new system, the one whose writings had given it an open and free start and impetus in the Society.

And here, inasmuch as his name necessarily appears, and must still necessarily appear, in much prominence in this account of the sad things that have happened to us in these latter days, I believe I must, once for all, disavow—as I do earnestly repudiate—any motives of personal animosity or ill-feeling towards him as a man, in the freedom with which I have believed it my duty thus to treat his published sentiments and the public tendency of his course. My early prepossessions, from association and otherwise, were decidedly favorable to him, being ignorant of his divergence from our ancient principles. And when at length the conviction was

fastened on my mind, that there really was this divergence, and even contrariety, it was (and has ever since remained, so far as I know my own heart), without any personal feeling, or the least willingness to injure him or do him injustice, that I was constrained to stand, with others, in an attitude of opposition to his declared sentiments, and the revolutionary tendency of his course.

In the spring of 1837, J. J. Gurney, having been liberated by his Monthly and Quarterly Meetings to pay a religious visit to America, opened his prospect in the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders in London, for its sanction. Such a proposal on his part brought some Friends into a narrow place. They apprehended danger, from the novelty of some of his views; they could not feel that the prospect was really owned by the Shepherd of the sheep, as being of His own putting forth; but they knew the powerful influence that was around him, and a slavish fear took hold of some, lest more harm might arise from opposing it, than by allowing it to proceed. Some, however, were faithful to their convictions of duty, and firmly opposed it. Among these, none appear to have spoken more clearly than Sarah L. Grubb; who, in the fear of her divine Master, expressed her apprehension, notwithstanding J. J. Gurney's talents, learning, and desire to do good, that he needed a submission to more humbling baptisms of spirit than he had yet had, to qualify him for the service; adding that, in feeling after a right sense in regard to the proposal, *restraint* had been the impression upon her mind; and she believed the language that ought to

go forth, was: "The Spirit suffereth it not now;" repeating this expression three times over.

Ann Jones expressed her cordial unity with S. Grubb's remarks; and similar views were expressed by George Jones, John Grubb, Abram Fisher, Joshua Treffry, and several other men and women Friends. An attempt was then made by Josiah Forster and Hannah C. Backhouse,* to take off from the weight of these objections, by implying that the speakers had objected merely to this being *the right time;* and, if the printed accounts of what passed are at all reliable, the former, taking advantage of a weak point in some of the objections, went so far as to intimate, that for Friends to object, as they had done, *to the time,* was entering into human reasoning; that they had simply to look at the thing itself, and what was the mind of Truth upon it: but that to judge about the time, was a departure from our spiritual views! Hannah C. Backhouse likewise, it seems, considered that they had nothing to do with *the time;* that times and seasons were not at their command, but in the Lord's hands (as if the simple sending forth of the servants, irrespective of time, was not quite as much so); adding that she had been distressed and surprised, and thought Friends, in objecting to *the time,* had lost sight of the main object; spoke much of her sympathy with J. J. Gurney in his conflicts of spirit; and warned those

* See "Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting of Friends," 1837. London: James Dinnis, 62 Paternoster Row. The writer, in quoting from this and other similar publications, only takes them as containing statements of facts, now become *matter of history,* and of important bearing; but would by no means be understood as approving of the publications.

who were opposing the concern, that it was very easy to be led by the cunning enemy to mistake our own imaginations and prepossessions for the impressions of the Lord's Spirit. All which was very plausible. She said she believed that "the reasoner" was uppermost with some present; and that, under what she herself conceived to be the true anointing, she believed their dear brother ought to go to America.

Sarah Grubb desired that friends should understand, that what she had said was not grounded on any *reasoning about the time;* neither was it given her to see that this concern would be right at any future time. In what she had said, she had simply in view to give the message from the Lord in this matter, and what she believed to be the mind of the Spirit. In doing this, she well knew that she must be given up to reproach, which she desired to be enabled to bear. The language sounded in her spiritual ear, was, "The Spirit suffereth it not now;" and it was not given to her on this occasion to see into futurity.

Elizabeth Dudley spoke warmly in support of the proposed visit. So did E. Fry, E. J. Fry, Samuel Gurney, and William Forster. Several on the other hand objected to it; others again spoke in approbation; but the opposition is said to have continued to the last.*

After considerable time it was proposed by Jonathan Backhouse and Josiah Forster, that a committee should be appointed, to draw up a certificate; which was accordingly done; the purport of the minute being, "that the subject had obtained deliberate consideration, and it

* "Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting," 1837, Dinnis, p. 11.

was concluded to appoint a few Friends," etc., naming them.

Josiah Forster suggested a small addition to the minute, that Friends had been united in desire to come to a right conclusion. But the clerk, William Allen, replied, that he thought, after all they had witnessed that morning, the less said, the better.

At the adjourned meeting, on the 3d of the sixth month, to which the committee presented their essay of a certificate, so great was the difficulty in coming to a conclusion, that it is said the meeting continued for nearly five hours, mainly occupied with this matter.*

Charlotte Burgess, of Leicester, early in the sitting, solemnly warned those who were learned and rich as to this world, to submit to the sword of the Lord, lest they should be swept away by the besom of the Most High, which she had seen to be in store towards this portion of the Lord's heritage; and testified that the Almighty required perfect obedience from his servants, in the exercise of their gifts; which was only to be attained by deep indwelling with the pure seed of life, light, and salvation, and by submission to those baptisms which would refine and make us as vessels of pure gold, fit for the Master's use.

The proposed certificate being read, several Friends who had objected to the concern at the former meeting, now expressed that their views had not changed. John Barclay, Jacob Green, Catherine Abbot, Sarah Harris, Abigail Dockray, and several others, expressed decided objections. The subject of J. J. Gurney's writings was

* Proceedings, published by Dinnis, p. 73.

again and again brought forward, as an obstacle, and a conference with him on that subject was proposed.* Jonathan Backhouse, however, turned this aside, by alleging that this was not the subject before the meeting.

A number of members approved of his being set at liberty; among whom John Allen, of Liskeard, said that he had taken a private opportunity of conversing with J. J. Gurney, who had cleared up several of his doubts.

Charlotte Burgess now said, that she had left the former meeting greatly burdened; and now that Sarah Grubb was absent (prevented by sickness), she dared not but state to the meeting, that before S. Grubb opened her mouth, she had herself received the very same words in the secret of her soul, and she believed it to be the will of the Most High, that "The Spirit suffereth it not now."

The same parties, generally, who had urged on the proposal at the former sitting, with some others, gave at this time their approval of the certificate; but the opposition to the concern is said to have been unabated to the last.† It has been said that as many as twenty members of that meeting manifested their objection to the proposal; and it is undeniable that a number more were exceedingly tried and afflicted with it, but were afraid to speak their sentiments. Lydia A. Barclay, for one, felt condemned on this account for a long time, as she acknowledged very feelingly in a letter to the author several years afterwards, adding, however, that she believed she had experienced forgiveness.

At length the clerk informed the meeting, that he had never felt equal conflict about any subject that had come

* Proceedings, published by Dinnis, p. 74. † Ib., p. 75.

before that meeting; but he thought, on the whole, it was the mind of the greater part of those who had spoken, that J. J. Gurney should be liberated; and he should therefore sign the certificate. Jonathan Backhouse expressed a hope that Friends would be careful, in writing to America, not to mention what had passed in that meeting.

I have been informed (though my own memory does not serve me in regard to it) that the certificate did not mention that the meeting united with the concern; but that, after much unity had been expressed, it was concluded to liberate, etc., or words equivalent.

I have believed it right to enter into the above particulars of this important event, in order to show that there really was so large, so weighty, and so persistent an opposition to the concern, that nothing like unity with it on the part of the meeting, as such, could be assumed; so much so, that most friends in the ministry, we may suppose, would have declined to pursue their prospect (one of so great importance) under such a manifestation of uneasiness with it.

When Joseph John Gurney arrived in America, in the autumn of that year (1837), he found us, to all appearance, a united body. But a very different appearance presented itself at his departure, after a visit of nearly three years.

The same fascination attended his course, and opened his way among Friends here, that had captivated the minds of so many in England. Even many who had professed, before his arrival, to have no confidence at all in his soundness as a Friend, now, dazzled with his character and outward attractions, gave themselves up

to an implicit adherence to him as a minister, and to a persistent and earnest advocacy of his claim to fulfil his mission here, without obstruction on account of anything he might have written or published before coming. The plausible but shallow and untenable ground was assumed, that it would be unwarrantable to "go behind his certificate," in calling him to account for views expressed or published previously; that his certificate entirely cleared his way, unless he should spread unsound views in this country; that we had nothing to do with his printed books, or with questions of disciplinary action belonging to London Yearly Meeting; but that it was our duty to receive him in the character of a minister of the gospel, according to his certificate.* This plea shut the mouths of very many, who found it more comfortable to hide their own feelings of uneasiness under it, than to expose themselves to showers of obloquy by attempting to withstand his claims. And although many stood aloof and avoided committing themselves to his support, and a few here and there openly

* The same flimsy objection, to "going behind his certificate," had been strongly urged, years before, in the case of Elias Hicks. Yet the case of John Hewlett, of Rhode Island, mentioned in "Beck and Ball's Account of London Friends' Meetings," page 81, as having occurred in the early part of the eighteenth century, shows that such a practice (where a certificate was wrongfully given, or did not set forth the case correctly) was then considered right. It is there mentioned that Friends in Philadelphia indorsed on the back of J. Hewlett's certificate, when presented to them on his visiting that city, the fact of his friends at home having erroneously stated him to be clear of marriage engagements, and their opinion that he ought to have told them of the circumstance, that he had, many years before (before he became a Friend), separated from his wife, in England.

showed their want of unity with him, yet he was at once taken by the hand and helped forward by influential individuals, as if all had been unquestionably clear.

Thomas Evans, who had been so well qualified for usefulness in the Hicksian troubles, and who, some time previously to J. J. Gurney's arrival, had seriously expressed to the writer of this, his apprehension "that a very small inducement would suffice to lead him to accept a bishop's mitre," now proposed to accompany him on his travels, and was only deterred from pursuing his wish, by the resolute opposition of his father, Jonathan Evans.

John Meader, of New England, in a season of sickness, said that he had some writings of J. J. Gurney in his possession, which he should keep as a testimony against him if he should ever come to this country, which he expected he would do. Yet he soon became one of his most earnest advocates.

Stephen Grellet, who had been so favored and qualified an instrument in his earlier life, but who had some time before this returned from England with a cherished persuasion (as he assured the writer with great satisfaction and confidence, as he walked from the ship immediately on his return), that J. J. Gurney was now on the right side, having repudiated the Beacon party, henceforth became his most influential advocate within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Many besides, of whom better things might have been expected from their former professions and standing, soon gave away their strength, and succumbed to his extraordinary influence.

If the Society had been in a healthy condition, measures would undoubtedly have been at once taken, to advise

him to return home, unless he could have satisfied Friends here that he was really in unity with our ancient principles. But great weakness now manifested itself among the members of the Select Quarterly Meeting in Philadelphia, who had been so valiant against the opposite errors of Elias Hicks; and who ought now once more to have stood in the gap, without fear, favor, or affection, acting on the principle, that the maintenance of the pure truth in the church was paramount to any personal consideration, either for themselves or any other man. Instead of this, Jonathan Evans and Caleb Peirce stood almost alone among the male Elders, in desiring that prompt and efficient measures might be taken for that purpose.

His travels in the United States and the West Indies were extensive and protracted, he not returning home until the seventh month of 1840. It is by no means needful here to go into a detail of his journeyings during those three years, and the various engagements which characterized his visit; nor yet of the different occasions in which he showed plainly that he was not one with true Friends, nor his mind baptized into a true sense of the awful weight of the work of gospel ministry in which he professed to be engaged. He appeared to be aware of the slippery nature of the ground on which he stood in the Society in this land, and that many eyes were upon him; and was accordingly very cautious as to the enunciation of his novel views. These would however at times escape him, notwithstanding all his care. I may mention one instance coming very unexpectedly under my own notice, which indeed had a particular effect in directing my attention to the fact (not clearly

known to me previously), that some at least of his sentiments were at variance with the doctrines of our ancient Friends. In a long discourse one evening to a crowded meeting in the Arch Street house in Philadelphia, in the spring of 1838, he distinctly declared, that "we are not to look to anything that we can experience *within ourselves*, for salvation, but we must look to Jesus," etc., following this with considerable dilating on what our blessed Saviour had done outwardly for us in that prepared body on the cross, but leaving his inward work almost if not entirely out of view. The writer was greatly startled, pondered over his words again, to see whether he had mistaken him, or whether the context, before or after, altered the one-sided tendency of the statement; but found, to his alarm, that if J. J. Gurney were right in this, then were all our early writers grievously wrong! The conviction of his unsoundness was soon afterwards abundantly confirmed.

His ministry, generally, during his stay here, appeared to be superficial, flowery, and ostentatious, with here and there an affectation of something like the doctrine of Friends; and this apparently graduated according to the supposed degree of acceptableness of a sprinkling of such doctrine to the audience. His sermons, for instance, in Philadelphia, and in some parts of New England, etc., were much less tinctured with modernizations than in many other places. At times they were calculated to attract the admiration, or affect the emotional feelings, of minds particularly susceptible to natural impressions; though by no means eloquent; but they were always and entirely (I believe) lacking the unction of the Holy Spirit, or the baptizing authority and efficacy of the gen-

uine flow of the gospel stream through rightly qualified instruments. I think it may be said, that to the anointed ear (which can "try words as the mouth tasteth meat"), his declarations in the line of either preaching or supplication, were formal, dry, and lifeless, though by many who heard them they were thought to be beautiful.

It seemed as if, with but little exception, the delegated watchmen had either been won over to connive at the approaching danger, and even to help it forward, or had become benumbed at their posts, and like the dumb watch-dogs of old, "could not bark," even to sound an alarm. Yet there were exceptions, chiefly among those somewhat young in life, or not in very prominent positions. Of these, there were a few in different parts of Philadelphia and New York Yearly Meetings, who could not hold their peace, being deeply affected with a sense of what was impending upon the Society. In New England also, a considerable number saw the danger, and prepared to oppose its progress; among the foremost of whom were John Wilbur and Thomas B. Gould, of Rhode Island, Seth Davis, Prince Gardner, and quite a company of Friends on the island of Nantucket.

J. J. Gurney attended the Yearly Meeting of New England, held at Newport in the summer of 1838. A report had been put in circulation, that he had made satisfaction to his friends in England in regard to the exceptionable sentiments in his books. John Wilbur however knew that this was not the case; and soon took an opportunity with him; in which he plainly informed him of the apprehensions of many Friends in regard to such published sentiments, so extensively spread abroad in the Society, "and suggested the desirableness of his

satisfying Friends in relation to such of his doctrines as were not in conformity with our acknowledged principles;" so as to open his way among friends in this land. "But instead of giving any encouragement of doing so, he entered into a prompt defence and justification of all his writings, without exception."* In consequence of this result of the interview, J. Wilbur believed it to be his religious duty, as way opened for it, to caution his fellow members against the unsound doctrines to be found in those publications.

Thomas B. Gould, then quite young, but zealous for the truth, felt it his duty also, at that time, openly to testify against the unsoundness of J. J. Gurney's published works, and to warn Friends of what he clearly saw to be departures from the ancient groundwork of the Society's faith. This drew upon him abundance of obloquy and persecution. About the time of the Yearly Meeting, J. J. Gurney came to his father's house in Newport; and Thomas took the opportunity thus afforded, to declare to him his dissatisfaction with his writings. The following is the substance of what passed between them, after T. B. Gould had opened the subject.† J. J. Gurney: "Oh, my dear friend, I did not come here on that account at all; I only came to manifest my love for thee and the family."

Referring to his writings, T. B. Gould said, "There are many sentiments in them, contrary to our acknowledged principles and testimonies. I am exceedingly dissatisfied with them. Wilt thou acknowledge that

* "Journal and Correspondence of John Wilbur," p. 276.

† "Life and Letters of T. B. Gould," p. 91, etc.

there is unsoundness in them, and by so doing remove the obstructions to thy service, that exist in my mind?"

J. J. Gurney: "All that I have to say to thee, my dear friend, is, that I have nothing to say on the subject of my writings. I do not consider it to be my present business; I am here on another concern, and my mind is very much exercised with it."

T. B. Gould: "The minds of Friends in this country are very uneasy in relation to much which thou hast written—as well as myself—and it is a very serious obstruction to thy work and service. . . . . If thou wilt acknowledge that there is unsoundness in them, and so remove the offence, I believe there are those who would receive thee with open arms."

J. J. Gurney: "My dear, I feel a great deal of love for thee, and I did when thou spoke in meeting the other day. I admire thy candor and uprightness; but I must decline entering upon the subject of my writings; they are very extensive; and all I have to say to thee is, that it is none of my business, and, to tell thee the truth, I do not consider it to be thine."

T. B. Gould: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar," etc. [quoting the text]. "Thou ought to conform to this precept, and deny such parts of thy writings as have given uneasiness to me and a multitude of other Friends. I do consider it thy duty to satisfy both me and them."

J. J. Gurney again made large professions of love for him, put one arm around him, and laid the other hand on his knee, in a fondling manner, and said, "All I can say is, to recommend thee to the Master, to whom thou must leave *me*;" and commenced some remarks by way of preaching to him.

T. B. Gould: "It has been required of me to do what I have done. My mind has been very deeply exercised on the subject of the unsound doctrines promulgated by thy books amongst us. It has deprived me of much sleep, and even affected my health." He then appealed tenderly to him to take away the ground of offence, and thus open the way, which was now entirely closed. But J. J. G. utterly refused, again and again, to enter into any *discussion*, as he chose to call it, upon the soundness of his writings, or to acknowledge unsoundness in them.

T. B. Gould replied to this: "I wish no *discussion;* I have asked for no such thing, but only for thee to condemn such parts of them as are contrary to our acknowledged principles, and have given Friends so much uneasiness."

J. J. Gurney now manifested considerable disturbance of mind, and again refused to make any concession.

T. B. Gould, after a short pause: "I must say to thee, that I am not satisfied with thy manner of preaching. Thou puttest the 'cart before the horse;' thou laborest to induce a belief in the doctrines testified of in the Scriptures, by the mere force of reason and argument, and the bare reading or hearing of them; and then speakest of the gift of the Spirit as a consequence of that belief or acceptance. This is contrary to that Scripture doctrine, 'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.' Now, it was because of the absolute necessity for men and women to come to this Spirit, to have their understandings opened, and their hearts quickened by its power, that our ancient Friends labored to exalt the testimony to

the true Teacher, and to bring them under his power and teaching; and they well knew that when people come to this ground and foundation, there is no danger of their undervaluing the Scriptures, for it is impossible; the manifestation of the Spirit now, will not contradict the revelation of the same Spirit in days that are past. They knew it; and I know it; but thou, instead of laboring to bring the minds of the people to the true Teacher, who promised to teach His people Himself those great doctrines and fundamental truths of the gospel,—bringing in the Scriptures as a collateral evidence and testimony to the truth of them,—thou goest about to persuade people to accept them in 'simple faith,' or to convince them merely by thy own powers of reasoning and argument; and holdest forth that the gift of the Spirit is consequent upon that kind of belief or acceptance. Now this is contrary to the principles of truth as professed by Friends."

J. J. G. appears to have been here brought to a stand, by this plain and earnest appeal; and could not deny it; but merely replied: "I am satisfied of thy sincerity and faithfulness, and am willing to be further instructed, as a Christian should be."

Would that this moment of openness, when the spirit of this man of learning was somewhat brought down and reached by the power of Truth in a stripling, might have been extended; and that there had been then present, Priscillas or Aquilas, faithful and deeply experienced fathers and elders of the church, qualified to have improved the opportunity, and "further instructed" him, while he could have received their admonitions, as to

the byways in which his feet were entangled, and in which he was entangling others! But he had his own adherents with him, and at this juncture others of the same tendencies came into the room. J. J. Gurney put on his hat, and seemed unwilling for any continuance of the conversation on these subjects; and thus T. B. Gould was prevented from fully relieving his mind of the concern on his account.

I have dwelt the more largely on what passed at this interview, inasmuch as it unfolds the manner in which J. J. Gurney baffled any attempt to bring his doctrines into question, and displays the persistence with which he declined to give any satisfaction to those who felt deeply concerned in regard to his erroneous published sentiments; who certainly had a right to apply to him for satisfaction, or for a correction of what they deemed a departure from our characteristic principles, on the part of one assuming the position of a "messenger of the churches," if not of an "apostle of Christ," and undeniably occupying a place of great influence for good or evil among our people.

Since the spring of 1838, the mind of the writer had been much and unexpectedly exercised with grief and concern, on finding, as before related, that the views held forth by J. J. Gurney in his ministry were not such as he could unite with, or reconcile with the doctrines of our ancient Friends. The minds of many members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and of some others, had likewise become greatly disturbed; much excitement was already the result of his presence among us; many were exceedingly uneasy with him; and others equally glad of his company, and offering him much adulation;

without clearly knowing, on the one part, the particular features of his disagreement with the settled principles of the Society, nor, on the other, what those settled principles really were. The writer's attention was now turned to the very serious nature of the question, and the necessity of knowing more distinctly, not only the ground, but also the distinct points of difference, and whether his writings (which, of course, were the public communication of his real sentiments—public property—and of great public influence) were in reality so greatly at variance, as was alleged, with the doctrines of our early and hitherto uniformly acknowledged authors. Under this view, a close examination of his various books was undertaken, with an earnest desire to be rightly assisted and directed, in so important an investigation, by the needful supply of that wisdom which is profitable to direct and qualify for judgment. The result of several months' attention to the subject was a clear and entire conviction, not only that on several fundamental points of doctrine his views (as expressed) were irreconcilable with the principles of the gospel, held by Friends; but that his starting-point (so to speak) was one which Friends had always earnestly testified against, as an inadequate basis for the knowledge of divine truth, being evidently a mere intellectual deduction, from study and human reasoning. The matter appearing to be thus clear and undeniable, and yet not generally very clearly understood; and knowing that J. J. Gurney was well aware of the uneasiness of many Friends both in England and America, and also of the ground of it, especially as regarded his published writings; the author believed it to be his

place (with the advice and concurrence of a minister and an elder with whom he was intimate),* to prepare, in manuscript, a series of extracts from those publications, on certain points of doctrine, contrasting them with extracts from standard works of the early Friends on the same subjects. This *Contrast* was divided into twelve main subjects, viz.: 1. The True Source of all Divine Knowledge; 2. Faith; 3. The Universal and Saving Light; 4. The Gospel; 5. The Scriptures and the Holy Spirit; 6. Justification; 7. Imputative Righteousness; 8. The Sabbath; 9. Prayer; 10. Worship; 11. The Resurrection of these Bodies; 12. The Atonement; on all which topics there appeared, more or less distinctly visible, a divergence from the well-known and recognized views of the Society from the beginning. This *Contrast*, becoming somewhat spoken of, was circulated, in manuscript, among various Friends in and about the city of Philadelphia; many of whom approved of it, while others were much disturbed, and greatly censured the writer.† It appeared eventually in

* Viz.: Alexander Dirkin and Samuel Hilles, of Wilmington, Delaware, both of whom, at that time, earnestly participated in the concern.

† This manuscript was made a plea for two attempts to procure the disownment of its author. One of these was promptly met by the late Henry Cope, who said, at once, "Tell him that, if they disown thee, they may disown me also; for I will go hand-in-hand with thee in the matter." The other was set aside by Thomas Stewardson, an elder of Arch Street Meeting, on the ground of its hasty irregularity. It was also made a plea for turning aside the intention of Daniel Wheeler, in compliance with an invitation given him at the suggestion of the above-named Thomas Stewardson, to make his home at the house of the author during his stay

print, without the writer's knowledge, having been incorporated, with a few additions, as an Appendix, in John Wilbur's "Narrative and Exposition."

On the 1st of the first month, 1839, Daniel Wheeler, having spent about four years in visiting the islands of the Pacific, and various parts of the Southern Ocean, arrived at New York, on a visit to Friends in North America.* Although he had, during his absence in the South Seas, had a sense that this journey would be required of him when the other was accomplished, and of course at that time knew nothing of the intended visit of J. J. Gurney to America, I have believed that a main purpose of the Great Shepherd of the sheep, in sending him to us at that juncture, may have been to counteract in some degree the injurious effects likely to ensue from the visit of J. J. Gurney. How far, however, this purpose was fulfilled, or how far it may have been frustrated by the circumstances by which D. Wheeler was surrounded immediately on his arrival, and by which he was entangled, is matter of serious question. Whilst here, his ministry was sound in doctrine, and often accompanied by an evidence of the true unction of the gospel. But he was caught hold of, and claimed, from his first arrival, by those who were active in support of J. J. Gurney, and who seemed determined to encompass him themselves, and to interpose every possible obstacle

in Philadelphia—a change, whereby he became encompassed by the supporters of J. J. Gurney. Yet he afterwards assured the writer, that, in his opinion, the issuing of that manuscript was entirely justifiable, and could not be called in question with safety to the Society.

* "Memoirs of D. Wheeler," London, 1842, p. 691.

to other association. This I know was at times oppressively felt by him, but by submitting to their constant pressure upon him, I have had sorrowfully to believe, that his service here, which might have been eminently beneficial, became more or less marred, and the full efficacy of his testimony for the ancient truth *in some degree* diminished. To my certain knowledge, he had no unity with the novel views and practices, and his mind was burdened with the "leading strings" of the party by which he was temporarily trammelled. But he had uncommonly warm personal attachments, and was slow to believe unfavorably in regard to any, particularly when plausible appearances of outward consistency were assumed; and he had not the resolution to make an open breach through the entanglements. He saw and understood the obstructions in the way of J. J. Gurney's being admitted, among Friends of sound views, as one in unity with the Society; and advised him candidly, while they were together in Philadelphia, that if he were so situated, he would seek the advice of the Elders collectively.* But this advice J. J. Gurney was not prepared to submit to.

Daniel Wheeler had evinced his sympathy with John Wilbur, of Rhode Island, in 1835, in a long and confidential letter from the island of Tahiti; in which letter he referred to some of the trials which had attended himself, near the time of his departure from England in the "Henry Freeling," from the censure of some "in our Society," who were rejecting an acquaintance for themselves with "the Master's voice" inwardly revealed, and

* This he told me himself, only a few minutes afterwards.

who, as he said, were "such as highly disapproved of John Wilbur's letters published by G. Crosfield."* And in 1839, just a month after his arrival in America, he wrote to John Wilbur affectionately from Philadelphia, speaking of the trials of the present day, "when those things which make truly desolate, and destitute of the Divine presence, stand where they ought not, in the place which should be holy, instead of pure vital religion;" and lamenting the condition of "many at this day," who were contenting themselves with "a mere outward declaration of the glad tidings—without coming to the heartfelt knowledge of this very gospel within themselves"—"finding it more palatable to the creature to be fed with pleasant food from the tree of knowledge," "than to have the attention turned to that holy principle of gospel light which shines in every heart."†

Daniel Wheeler was taken sick during his return voyage from England, in the spring of 1840, whither he had gone from America, the previous autumn, to attend upon his dying son Charles. He was confined in New York by illness about six weeks, and died there on the 13th of the sixth month, in the 69th year of his age.

Joseph John Gurney attended the Yearly Meeting of New York in the fifth month, 1840; at which time Jacob Green, a minister from Ireland, was also present. The latter was exceedingly tried on account of the state of things in this land, brought about by J. J. Gurney's visit, and felt constrained to seek an interview with him

* "Journal and Correspondence of John Wilbur," p. 204. See p. 240, of this volume.

† J. Wilbur's Journal, etc., p. 244.

on the subject before leaving America. At this interview, which occurred at the house of the late W. Birdsall in the city of New York, in the presence of two other English Friends, Jacob Green opened his uneasiness to J. J. Gurney; and is said to have spoken so plainly to him, that the latter at length intimated to him his desire, that he would *mind his own business*. This circumstance was related to the author by a Friend who was staying, at the time, at the same house. Jacob Green returned to Ireland almost directly, saying to some Friends, that he was fleeing for his life. J. J. Gurney left America on his return home, in the seventh month.

By the time that J. J. Gurney had finished his travels in the United States, it had become evident that a great breach had been made in the harmony of the body; that the Society was divided into two opposing classes; one earnestly advocating his claims to acceptance as a minister in unity, and disposed to adopt his sentiments and to fraternize with his adherents in England; the other equally earnest in denouncing his opinions and the general character of his ministerial course, as tending to produce a fundamental departure from the ancient track; and indignant at the course of London Yearly Meeting, in giving its sanction to these novelties, and throwing such a firebrand amongst us, as his presence on this side of the Atlantic had proved to be.

It may be said, that it was the London Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders that was directly accountable for this, rather than the Yearly Meeting at large; inasmuch as it was that Select body which issued J. J. Gurney's certificate for service in this land, notwith-

standing the weighty objections made at the time, mainly based on the erroneous nature of his published sentiments. But London Yearly Meeting itself had, in 1836, opened the way for his passing with facility; and made a beginning in the line of discarding the ancient principles of the Society; when it adopted in its General Epistle his favorite dogma, that the Bible is "*the only* authorized record" of divine truth or duty, "*the* appointed means of a knowledge of the blessed truths of Christianity." Moreover, in 1847, it officially identified itself with his erroneous system, by adopting and issuing the Memorial concerning him, which declared that from his twenty-fourth year,* he "maintained, with holy boldness, the principles and testimonies of the Society, through the remainder of his life;" and that in all his undertakings "he was actuated by a sincere desire . . . to maintain, with unflinching integrity, the truth as it is in Jesus." These words had indeed the appearance of being introduced for the very purpose of giving to his writings, to which they have especial reference, the official sanction of the body.

The Yearly Meetings of Indiana and Carolina appeared to be wholly under the influence of the spirit of adulation of the man, and admiration of his ministry and ways; and many bitter reflections were cast upon those friends of Philadelphia and elsewhere, who could not join in with the popular current. Baltimore Yearly Meeting had a few, and New York and New England

* His "first book" was published, according to his own statement, when he was thirty years of age, so that the above declaration must include all his books. See his "Memoirs," vol. i p. 161.

each a rather larger number of friends, who stood opposed to the new views and the claims of their author. But in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, there was a very considerable proportion of the members, at that time, who were by no means prepared to follow the dangerous and delusive track; many of them being clearly convinced that, if followed generally, it would lead away the Society from its original foundation. In the country districts of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, particularly, there were still preserved many friends of solid religious experience, as well as some in the city, who were firm and decided in opposing the coming danger. Among these were then to be found most of the ministers and elders of that Yearly Meeting, and likewise of the members of the Meeting for Sufferings; although some lamentable instances to the contrary were already apparent.

In the succeeding volume, it is the intention of the author, if spared and enabled for the work, to show how the party of innovation, among those who had escaped the devastations of the Hicksian defection, recklessly inaugurated and carried on the work of an opposite schism, in practice as well as in doctrine, by the persecutions and disorderly excommunications pursued by them in New England; and how this course (by which they tore the Society to pieces there) unavoidably spread schism and separation in other parts;—to develop afterwards the sad effects of the rise and progress of a Laodicean spirit of compromise, conniving at that which was opposing

the truth and revolutionizing the Society; a spirit which, conservative in its professions, and declaiming indiscriminately against all separations as wrong under any circumstances, was in reality disposed for "peace at any price," and thus produced weakness and dimness of vision among its own advocates, and discouragement and scattering among many of those who were at first more or less valiant for the ancient faith, and had begun to stand against the innovations;—and finally, with a brief review of the lapsed condition of those who have adhered either to the Hicksian system on the one hand, or to the more modern or Gurney system on the other, to endeavor to indicate to the reader the grounds for the conviction, that although honest-hearted individuals may be found on one side or the other, through weakness or ignorance of the true state of the case, clinging to each of the two great schismatic bodies whose origin has been here portrayed; yet that in so far as any may sanction, by co-operation or connivance, the standing of either of those bodies, or recognize them as bodies of Friends, they are sanctioning and promoting that which is not of the Truth, but a system more or less directly, but really and vitally, opposed to the religion of our forefathers; that thus, in short, they are united in profession, not with true Friends, or "the people called Quakers," but with a schismatic body.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.